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ABSTRACT

This study surveyed a representative sample of 1,057 companies with 100 or more employees to assess how U.S. companies are responding to the work-life needs of the nation's changing workforce. Specifically, the study sought to identify the extent to which companies provide benefits, programs, and policies and create supportive workplace environments addressing employees' work-life needs, and the characteristics of companies most likely to provide this assistance and support. The findings indicated that companies typically allowed workers to leave work to attend school/child care functions; employees were also allowed to return to work gradually following childbirth/adoption. Only 10 percent of company representatives thought that using flexible time and leave policies jeopardized employees' advancement opportunities. Companies were more likely to provide low-cost child care options such as dependent care assistance plans than high-cost options such as on-site child care. More than half the companies provided Employee Assistance Programs addressing work-life issues. Twelve percent of companies offered some type of program for teenage children of employees. Companies were most likely to train supervisors in managing diversity and least likely to have career counseling programs for women. Almost all companies offered health insurance for full-time employees, but only 33 percent offered benefits to part-time employees. Companies most likely to provide work-life program and supportive work environments were involved in finance/insurance/real estate services, were larger, had a larger proportion of top executive positions filled by women or minorities, a larger percentage of women or part-time employees, a lower percentage of hourly or union employees, a larger number of company sites, and reported difficulty in filling positions. (KB)

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The 1998 Business Work-Life Study

A SOURCEBOOK

Ellen Galinsky
James T. Bond

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The 1998 Business Work-Life Study

A SOURCEBOOK

by Ellen Galinsky
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Executive Summary

The Families and Work Institute's 1998 Business Work-Life Study (BWLS) is one of the first and most comprehensive studies of how U.S. companies are responding to the work-life needs of the nation's changing workforce. Funded by Allstate Insurance Company, The Chase Manhattan Bank, The Commonwealth Fund, Freddie Mac Foundation, Kaiser Permanente, and Travelers Foundation, the 1998 BWLS surveys a representative sample of 1,057 for-profit (84 percent of the sample) and not-for-profit companies (16 percent of the sample) with 100 or more employees. It was developed to complement the Families and Work Institute's 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce (NSCW), which surveyed a representative sample of employees in the U.S. labor force. In the 1997 NSCW, we found that employees with more supportive workplaces as well as better quality jobs are more likely than other workers to have:

- higher levels of job satisfaction;
- more commitment to their companies' success;
- greater loyalty to their companies; and
- a stronger intention to remain with their companies.

The 1997 NSCW also found that employees with more demanding jobs and less supportive workplaces experience:

- more stress;
- poorer coping;
- worse moods; and
- less energy off the job—all of which jeopardize their personal and family well-being.

Additionally, we found that when employees' personal and family well-being is compromised by work, they experience more negative spillover from home to work, which diminishes their job performance.

"This study provides a benchmark for companies to assess how they stack up today in 1998."
—Joy Bunson
Senior Vice President, Organizational Development, The Chase Manhattan Bank

The 1998 BWLS enables us to assess the extent to which businesses are addressing some of the factors we have identified as predictive of workers' productivity and well-being. Specifically, we ask:

- To what extent do companies provide benefits, programs, and policies and create supportive workplace environments that address the work-life needs of their employees?
- What are the characteristics of companies most likely to provide this assistance and support?

Major findings related to each of these questions are summarized here and elaborated in the full report.

Question 1

To What Extent Do Companies Provide Work-Life Programs and Policies and Supportive Workplace Environments?

"This study demonstrates that business must adopt flexible programs if they are to be competitive."
—Bernard Milano
Executive Director, KPMG Foundation, KPMG Peat Marwick LLP

Flexible Work Arrangements

Of the eight flexible work arrangements considered, companies with 100 or more employees most frequently allow workers to take time off work to attend school and child care functions (88 percent) and to return to work on a gradual basis following childbirth and adoption (81 percent). More than two-thirds of employers allow traditional flextime and more than half allow employees to move back and forth from full-time to part-time and to work at home occasionally. Less common are job sharing, regular work at home, and daily flextime. However, job sharing and regular work at home are the flexibility options most likely to be under consideration by companies not currently offering them.

Only 18 percent of companies offering one or more flexible work arrangements perceive the costs of their investments in these policies as outweighing the benefits, while 36 percent perceive these programs as cost-neutral and 46 percent perceive a positive return on their investments.

Table A: Flexible Work Arrangements

Does your company allow employees ...	*Yes*	*No, But Considering*
To periodically change starting and quitting times?	68%	9%
To change starting and quitting times on a daily basis?	24	7
To return to work gradually after childbirth or adoption?	81	7
To move from full-time to part-time and back again while remaining in the same position or level?	57	5
To share jobs?	37.5	17
To work at home occasionally?	55	6
To work at home or off-site on a regular basis	33	14
To take time off for school/child care functions	88	Not Asked

(n=1057)

Leaves

Except for companies meeting the legal exemption of having fewer than 50 employees within a 75 mile radius of one of their worksites, companies interviewed for the 1998 BWLS are mandated to comply with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993. This law requires that 12 weeks of unpaid, job-guaranteed leave for childbirth, adoption, foster care placement, a serious personal medical condition, or care of a child or spouse with a serious medical condition be granted to employees who have worked at least 1,250 hours over the preceding year.

Between 7 and 10 percent of companies with 100 or more employees nationwide provide fewer than 12 weeks of leave of different types, while 15 percent through 33 percent provide 13 weeks or more (Table B). Among companies offering fewer than 12 weeks, we estimate that two percent or fewer are clearly out of compliance with the law, based on having only one site *and* 100 or more employees at that site. Although additional companies are likely to be out of compliance, survey data do not permit accurate estimates of this number. On the other hand, a large number of the 37 percent of companies in this sample with an average of fewer than 50 employees per site are undoubtedly complying with the law, even though they may not be required to. Again, we are unable to estimate the actual percentages.

"This study looks at those factors that predict employees' ability to commit to their companies and to deliver business results. Since the connections are so apparent and strong, it is hard to understand why there isn't an even higher prevalence of these practices among companies."
—Francene Rodgers
Founder and CEO, WFD

Table B: Summary of Leave Policies

Leave Policy	*Less than 12 Weeks*	*12 Weeks*	*13–26 Weeks*	*More than 26 Weeks*	*Median and Mean Number of Weeks*
Maternity Leave	9%	58%	25%	8%	Median: 12 wks Mean: 17 wks
Paternity Leave	10	74	13	3	Median: 12 wks Mean: 14 wks
Adoption, Foster Care Leave	10	74.5	13	3	Median: 12 wks Mean: 14 wks
Care of Seriously Ill Children Leave	7	78	11	4	Median: 12 wks Mean: 14 wks

(n=1057)

"For many years employees have brought work issues and problems home with them and have been told at work to keep their personal problems outside the office. Today, however, employers are realizing that those home issues must be dealt with to ensure the most productive workers."
—Charles Raymond
President, Travelers Foundation

Although paid time off to care for mildly ill children is not required by law, 49 percent of companies with 100 or more employees allow employees to take some time for this purpose without having to use vacation days or losing pay.

Women on maternity leave are the most likely of all workers to receive some pay during leave (Table C). Most companies (81 percent) fund this pay by a general temporary disability insurance plan.

Only 17 percent of companies think the costs of leave programs exceed the benefits, while 42 percent think leave programs are cost-neutral and another 42 percent perceive a positive return on investments in these programs.

Table C: At Least Some Replacement Pay during Leave

Leave Policy	*At Least Some Replacement Pay*
Maternity Leave	53%
Paternity Leave	13
Adoption/Foster Care Leave	12.5

(n=1057)

"The discrepancy between the company's perception and the employee's perception of how flexible arrangements affect career advancement shows there is a need for more education internally."

—Katharine Hazzard
Manager, Work/Family Programs, John Hancock Financial Services

Use of Flexible Time and Leave Policies Without Jeopardizing Advancement

Only 10 percent of company representatives responding to the 1998 BWLS survey feel that the use of flexible time and leave policies jeopardizes employees' opportunities for advancement. In contrast, the Institute's 1997 NSCW found that among employees of private-sector companies with 100 or more employees nationally, 40 percent agreed somewhat or strongly that using flexible schedules and taking time off for family reasons impedes job advancement. Although the questions are not identical in the two surveys, the difference between employers' and employees' views is large enough to suggest that there is significant disagreement between employers and employees on the extent to which use of flexible policies jeopardizes advancement.

Child Care Assistance

Not unexpectedly, companies are more likely to provide low- or no-cost child care options (such as DCAPs) than those that are more costly (Table D). The number of

Table D: Child Care Assistance

Does your company provide...	*Yes*	*No, But Considering*
Access to information to help locate child care in the community?	36%	12%
Child care at or near the worksite?	9	12
Payment for child care with vouchers or other subsidies that have direct costs to the company?	5	5
Dependent care assistance plans (DCAPs) that help employees pay for child care with pretax dollars?	50	Not asked
Reimbursements of child care costs when employees work late?	4	Not asked
Reimbursement of child care costs when employees travel for business?	6	Not asked
Child care for school-age children on vacation?	6	2.5
Back-up or emergency care for employees when their regular child care arrangements fall apart?	4	4.5
Sick care for the children of employees?	5	3
Financial support of local child care through a fund or corporate contributions beyond United Way?	9	Not asked
Public/Private partnership in child care	5	Not asked

(n=1057)

companies considering new options, such as resource and referral (12 percent) and on- or near-site child care centers (12 percent), suggests that there could be growth in employer-supported child care in the coming years.

Among companies offering any child care benefit, 24 percent perceive negative returns on their investments, seven to eight percentage points higher than the percentages reported for flexible work arrangements and family leave policies. Another 40 percent perceive child care assistance programs to be cost-neutral and 36 percent think the benefits of these programs outweigh their costs.

Elder Care Assistance

While 23 percent of companies with 100 or more employees currently offer elder care resource and referral services, only 9 percent offer long-term care insurance for family members and only 5 percent make direct financial contributions to elder care programs in the communities where they operate. Another 5 percent are considering resource and referral services, while 2 percent are considering direct financial support for local programs. Most notably, 12 percent of companies are considering long-term care insurance for family members, a benefit of growing interest to the aging workforce and population at large (Table E).

Among companies offering any form of elder care assistance, 19 percent perceive the costs for these programs as outweighing benefits, somewhat lower than the 24 percent who perceive a negative return on investments in child care assistance and in line with the 17 and 18 percent who perceive a negative return on investments in flexible work arrangements and family leave policies. In addition, 60 percent view investments in elder care programs as cost-neutral, while 21 percent perceive positive returns on their investments.

Table E: Elder Care Assistance

Does your company provide....	*Yes*	*No, But Considering*
Elder care resource and referral services?	23%	5%
Long-term care insurance for family members?	9	12
Direct financial support for local elder care programs?	5	2

(n=1057)

Helping Employees Resolve Family Problems

More than one-half of companies (56 percent) provide Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) that address work-life issues. In addition, one quarter (25 percent) provide work-life seminars or workshops at the workplace (Table F).

Table F: Resolving Family Problems

Does your company provide ...	*Yes*	*No*
An Employee Assistance Program designed to help employees deal with problems that may affect their work or personal life?	56%	44%
Workshops or seminars on parenting, child development, care of the elderly, or work-family problems?	25	75

(n=1057)

Programs for the Teenage Children of Employees

Twelve percent of companies with 100 or more employees offer some type of program for the teenage children of employees (Table G). Most frequently offered are EAPs (5 percent) and counseling (3 percent), suggesting that some companies have expanded the scope of their EAP/counseling programs to specifically address the problems and needs of teenagers and their families.

Table G: Programs for Teenagers

Employer Characteristic	*Provide*	*Do Not Provide*
Any Program	12%	88%
After-School Programs	0.5	99.5
Financial Support for Community Programs	1	99
Seminars/Workshops	2	98
Summer Programs	0.3	99.7
Employee Assistance Programs	5	95
Referral Information Services	1	99
Scholarship Programs/ Educational Assistance	1	99
Counseling	3	97
Other	1	99

(n=1057)

"Despite a great deal of progress in corporations' responding to employee work-life needs, the vast majority remain unresponsive to employee needs. In light of intense competition for attracting and retaining employees, barely a third offer even the most rudimentary services such as information and referral for child care (even less for elder care.) For issues such as employees having to deal with adolescents, or children home alone, they are virtually non-existent. So is the glass half empty or half full?"

—Brad Googins
Director,
Center for Corporate Community Relations,
Boston College

Supportiveness of Supervisors and the Workplace Culture

Company representatives were asked to assess the supportiveness of their workplaces (Table H). More than half responded "very true" to statements assessing whether men and women who must attend to family matters are equally supported by the organization (66 percent) and whether supervisors are encouraged to be supportive of employees with family problems (55 percent). Far fewer responded "very true" when asked about whether management takes employees' personal needs into account when making business decisions (31 percent) and whether the company makes a genuine effort to inform employees of the availability of work-life assistance (19 percent).

Table H: Supportiveness of Supervisors and the Culture

Statements about Supportiveness	*Very True*	*Somewhat True*	*Not Very True Not True at All*
Supervisors are encouraged to be supportive of employees with family problems and to find solutions that work for both employees and the organization	55%	41%	4%
Men and women who must attend to family matters are equally supported by supervisors and the organization	66	30	5
The organization makes a real and ongoing effort to inform employees of available assistance for managing work and family responsibilities	19	44	37
Management takes employees' personal needs into account when making business decisions	31	51	18

(n=1057)

Company Efforts to Develop Supportive Supervisors

Companies with 100 or more employees are most likely to train supervisors in managing diversity and least likely to have a career counseling or management/leadership program for women—62 percent versus 22 percent, a striking difference of 40 percentage points (Table I). Falling between these extremes are training for supervisors to respond to the work-family needs of employees and the consideration of how well supervisors manage work-family issues when making job-performance appraisals.

"Companies that actively create a supportive environment with work-life programs and practices are contributing positively to their employees' morale and dedication. Those that take employees' personal needs into account when making business decisions, even if not implementing formal policies, are also making a significant difference in the lives of their people. The two avenues should not be mutually exclusive."

—Beth McCarty
Vice President, Corporate Accounts, Ceridian Performance Partners

Table I: Programs for Supervisors and Career Development

Program	*Provide*	*Do Not Provide*
Train supervisors in responding to work-family needs of employees	43%	57%
Train supervisors in managing diversity	62	38
Consider how well supervisors manage the work-family issues of employees in making job performance appraisals	44	56
Career counseling program or a management/leadership program for women	22	78

(n=1057)

Health Care Benefits

Health insurance coverage for oneself and one's family is the single most valued benefit among U.S. workers, who rely almost exclusively on their employers for coverage. Ninety-seven percent of companies with 100 or more employees provide personal health insurance coverage for full-time workers, but only 33 percent offer full or prorated benefits to part-time workers (Table J). Ninety-five percent offer family coverage, with 87 percent paying at least part of the premium for family members. Fourteen percent of companies offer health insurance coverage for unmarried partners who are living together. Fifty-one percent of companies offer wellness programs for employees and their families, and 37 percent provide space and milk-storage facilities for mothers who are nursing infants.

"From a marketplace perspective, it is encouraging to see that more companies are moving toward more flexibility with their work/life benefits. There is, however, still work to be done. For example, more companies are offering flexible work arrangement options, but few are providing health care coverage for part-time workers."

—Nancy Berry
Director of Welfare and Work/Life, Allstate Insurance Company

Table J: Health Care Benefits

Does your company provide ...	*Yes*	*No*
Personal health insurance for full-time employees?	97%	3%
Health insurance for part-time employees on a full or pro-rated basis?	33	67
Health insurance that includes coverage for family members?	95	5
Full or part payment of premium for family members?	87	13
Health insurance coverage for unmarried partners who live together?	14	86
Wellness program for employees and their families?	50.5	49.5
Space and storage facilities at work that allow women who are nursing to continue to do so by expressing milk?	37	63

(n=1057)

Benefits to Enhance Economic Security

Of the benefits considered in this study, companies with 100 or more employees are most likely (90 percent) to offer 401(k) or 403(b) retirement plans, with for-profit companies using the former and nonprofits the latter (Table K). Moreover, 91 percent of companies operating individual retirement plans also make contributions to them. Next most popular are temporary disability insurance plans (70 percent of companies), for which 84 percent of companies pay all or part of the premium. Forty-eight percent of companies provide defined-benefit plans, and 24 percent offer scholarships or other educational assistance for the children of employees.

Table K: Benefits to Enhance Economic Security

Does your company provide ...	*Yes*	*No*
Temporary disability insurance (TDI)	70%	30%
Full or partial payment by company of TDI premiums	84	16
Defined/guaranteed benefit pension plan	48	52
401(k) or 403(b) individual retirement plan	90	10
Company contribution to individual retirement plan	91	9
Scholarships or other educational assistance for the children of employees	24	76

(n=1057)

Company Involvement in Community Life

Eleven percent of companies with 100 or more employees are engaged in some type of partnership with local or state government to assist employed people in the community to meet their family and personal responsibilities (Table L).

Seventy-three percent of companies with 100 or more employees allow their workers to volunteer in community activities—to an unknown extent—during work hours.

"There is real potential to broaden the impact of work-life programs through public-private partnerships."
—Peg Sprague
Group Manager, Community Development, WFD

Table L: Public-Private Partnerships

Type of Initiative	*Involved*	*Not Involved*
All types	11%	89%
Child Care Programs	5	95
Parent Education and Support Programs	7	93
Health Care Programs	6	94
Welfare to Work Programs	7	93
Education Programs	9	91

(n=1057)

"The labor market continues to tighten. Compelling research that correlates a supportive workplace to increased employee productivity and greater loyalty continues to be prevalent. Why then are there not a greater number of companies, both large and small, responding to the needs of contemporary family life? The service industry, dominated by hourly workers, is noticably behind. The ironic thing is that the quality of our product, the delivery of service, is driven by employee mood. Why are there not more service industry employers investing in a supportive workplace?"
—Donna Klein
Vice President, Workplace Effectiveness, Marriott International

Question 2

What Are the Characteristics of Companies Most Likely to Provide Work-Life Programs and Policies and Supportive Work Environments?

Industry

Industry is the most frequent predictor of work-life support, with the finance/insurance/real estate services standing out as the most generous of industries in most areas, while the wholesale and retail trades emerge as least generous time and again. The 1998 BWLS also reveals that professional and "other" services and, in some cases, manufacturers are more likely to provide certain types of work-life assistance.

Company Size

The next most frequent predictor of work-life assistance and a supportive work environment is company size. Overall, 25 percent of companies in the 1998 BWLS have

"We know from Catalyst research that employees today want and need supportive workplaces. This is especially true of dual-career couples, who are more likely to leave their company if they don't get the support they want. Women leaders are helping to create workplaces that are more in keeping with the needs of employees. At the same time, when the workplace environment provides the support they need, women are more able to move into top executive positions."
—Marcia Brumit Kropf
Vice President, Research and Advisory Services, Catalyst

"The strong correlation between presence of women and people of color and companies providing more favorable benefits is truly astounding. I wonder which comes first—enlightened companies attracting/promoting women and people of color and also endorsing work-life assistance for the same reasons or if it is the women and people of color who advocate once there."
—Linda Hall Whitman
President, Ceridian Performance Partners

1000 or more employees. Larger companies are more likely than their smaller counterparts to provide flexible work options and longer maternity leaves, paternity leaves, and leaves for adoptive parents, as well as wage replacement during maternity leave. However, smaller companies are more likely to provide wage replacement for paternity leave. Of the 11 child care options we examined, larger companies are more likely to provide seven. Likewise, larger companies are more likely to provide elder care programs, employee assistance programs, programs for the teenage children of employees, work-life seminars, health care and wellness programs, and work-life training for supervisors.

Proportion of Top Executive Positions Filled by Women

One of the most provocative findings of the 1998 BWLS is the broad extent to which having a larger proportion of top executive positions filled by women is associated with the provision of work-life assistance. It is the third most frequent predictor, and quite close to company size in importance. Interestingly, 30 percent of companies have no women in top executive positions (either the CEO or direct reports to the CEO), while 70 percent had one or more women in these leadership positions, and 20 percent of companies have women in half or more of their top positions. Some of the findings are quite dramatic:

- Eighty-two percent of companies with women in half or more of their top executive positions provide traditional flextime, compared with 56 percent of companies with no women in top positions.
- Six times as many companies (19 percent) with women in half or more of their top executive positions provide on- or near-site child care as those with no women in top management (3 percent).
- Sixty percent of companies with women in half or more of their top executive positions provide dependent-care assistance plans, compared with 37 percent with no women in these senior positions.
- Thirty-three percent of companies with women in half or more of their top executive positions offer elder care resource and referral programs, compared with 14 percent of companies with no women in key positions.

Proportion of Top Executive Positions Filled by Minorities

An equally provocative and similar pattern of findings emerges when we examine the relationship between the proportion of top executive positions filled by minorities and the prevalence of work-life supports. The proportions of top executive positions filled by minorities or women are equally important predictors. Since the majority of companies in the sample (63 percent) have no top positions filled by minorities, having even one

or more top positions filled by minority employees can have an impact. For example:

- More than 80 percent of companies with minorities in 25 percent or more of top executive positions offer traditional flextime versus 64 percent of companies with no minorities in key positions.
- About twice as many companies with at least one top executive position filled by a minority employee offer pay during leaves for adoption and foster care placement as companies with no top positions filled by minorities.
- Four times as many companies (26 percent) with minorities in 50 percent or more of top executive positions offer on- or near-site child care as companies with no minorities in key positions (6 percent).

"The issue of diversity has moved from the moral imperative to the strategic imperative."
—Ted Childs
VP, Global Workforce Diversity, IBM

Women as a Percentage of the Workforce

The percentage of women in a company's workforce is also predictive of work-life assistance in many areas we examined, albeit in a dual way. When women constitute a *larger* proportion of the workforce, companies are more likely to provide a number of options, some of which could be considered costly, some not—such as job sharing, part-time work, time off for parents to attend school and child care functions, longer maternity leaves, care for children during school vacations, direct subsidies for child care, and so forth. Conversely, we found that companies are more likely to invest in certain more costly options when women constitute a *smaller* percentage of the workforce—such as wage replacement during maternity leave, personal and family health insurance coverage, and paid family health insurance. Overall, in 31 percent of companies, women represent 60 percent or more of the workforce, while in 32 percent, they represent less than 40 percent.

Hourly Employees as a Percentage of Workforce

While it could be argued that hourly workers have greater needs for work-life assistance because they tend to be concentrated in lower-paid jobs, the 1998 BWLS reveals that companies with *larger* proportions of hourly workers are less likely than other companies to provide many forms of assistance. For example, they are less likely to provide replacement pay during maternity leave and during leave for adoption or foster care placement, leave for mildly ill children, employee assistance programs, work-life seminars, and personal and family health insurance coverage. On the other hand, companies with larger proportions of hourly employees are more likely to report that they take employees' personal needs into account when making business decisions.

"The presence of a more diverse workforce—women and minorities—is increasing the scope of benefits and number of companies that offer employees work-life programs, policies, and responsibilities. However, there appears to be somewhat of a two-tiered system. Companies with large numbers of low-wage employees and hourly-wage earners—who are frequently women and minorities—are less likely to offer these benefits while companies that want to attract and keep women and minorities in key executive positions are more likely to provide these benefits."
—Kathryn Taaffe McLearn
Assistant Vice President for Youth Programs, The Commonwealth Fund

"It is fascinating that there are different predictors of providing standardized benefits and of providing flexibility. Since both are important to employees, we need to think about how companies can respond to both needs."
—Marcie Pitt-Catsouphes
Director,
Center for Work and Family at Boston College

Part-Time Employees as a Percentage of Workforce

Companies with larger proportions of part-time workers are more likely than companies with smaller proportions of part-timers to offer the following flexible work arrangements: gradual return to work after childbirth, movement from full- to part-time work and back again, and job sharing. On the other hand, they are less likely to offer health care benefits and benefits to ensure economic security. As is the case for companies with larger proportions of hourly workers, companies with larger proportions of part-time workers report that they are more likely to take employees' personal needs into account when making business decisions.

Union Members as a Percentage of Workforce

Seventy-eight percent of companies with 100 or more employees have no unionized workers, while 12 percent have 30 percent or more unionized workers. Companies with larger proportions of unionized workers are less likely to provide part-time options, a gradual return to work after childbirth, and flexibility in moving from full-time to part-time and back again. However, they are more likely to provide longer leaves for paternity and adoption, paid maternity leave, and leave for mildly ill children. They are also more likely to provide health benefits and benefits to ensure economic security. Some of the findings are very impressive. For example:

- Sixty-five percent of companies with 30 percent or more unionized workers provide time off to care for mildly ill children without lost pay, compared with 46 percent of companies with no unionized workers.
- Forty percent of companies with 30 percent or more unionized workers pay the entire premium for family health care insurance, compared with 8 percent of companies with no unionized workers.
- Eighty-seven percent of companies with 30 percent or more unionized workers provide temporary disability insurance versus 66 percent of companies with no unionized workers.
- Seventy-nine percent of companies with 30 percent or more unionized workers provide defined/guaranteed benefit pensions versus 40 percent of companies with no unionized workers.

On the other hand, the proportion of unionized workers is not predictive of any of the child care options examined in the 1998 BWLS.

Number of Sites

Having a larger number of company sites is associated with widely scattered types of work-life assistance. Companies with more locations are more likely to provide tradi-

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tional flextime, flexibility in moving from full-time to part-time work and back again, occasional work at home, dependent-care assistance plans, long-term care insurance, training to manage diversity, temporary disability insurance, scholarships for children of employees, and partnerships with state and local government.

"Work-life programs should be most critical during adverse business conditions. They can play an important role in helping employees and companies during pressured times."
—**Dawn Walsh**
Manager of Public Affairs, Joseph E. Seagram & Sons, Inc.

Downsizing, Difficulty in Filling Skilled Positions, Difficulty in Filling Entry-Level or Hourly Positions, and Financial Performance

In the current business climate, we expected that downsizing, recruitment, and financial performance would be related to the presence or absence of work-life assistance programs. However, business conditions did not emerge frequently as predictors in the 1998 BWLS.

Companies reporting difficulty in filling skilled positions (68 percent of the sample) are more likely than other companies to provide traditional flextime, career counseling or management/leadership training for women, personal health insurance for part-time workers, and individual retirement accounts. On the other hand, companies finding it easy to fill skilled positions are more likely to reimburse child care costs for employees who work late and to provide health insurance coverage for unmarried partners who live together.

Companies finding it difficult to fill entry level, hourly positions (40 percent of the sample) are more likely to allow flexibility in moving from full-time to part-time work and to allow time off to care for mildly ill children. On the other hand, companies that find it easier to fill entry-level, hourly positions are more likely to reimburse child care costs for working late and overnight business travel and to provide health insurance coverage for unmarried partners who live together.

Companies that have downsized in the past year (29 percent of the sample) are more likely to allow employees to work at home occasionally. They are also more likely to provide backup care and sick child care. Since companies that downsize often rely on fewer people to continue to do the same amount of work as before work-life options that minimize absenteeism make sense. Companies that have downsized are also more likely to offer EAPs, presumably for the survivors and the pink-slipped.

Finally, companies that report doing worse than their competitors are more likely to allow employees time off to attend school or child care functions. Companies that are outperforming their competitors are more likely to make direct contributions to elder care programs in the community, keep employees well-informed of the work-life assistance available to them, and offer career counseling and management/leadership programs for women. In addition, they are more likely to provide personal health insurance coverage, defined/guaranteed benefit pensions, individual retirement accounts, and scholarships or other educational assistance to the children of employees.

"This thorough review of workplace practice provides insight for significant actions that businesses can take to maximize the resiliency and effectiveness of the workforce."
—**Candice P. Lange**
Director, Workforce Partnering Initiatives Eli Lilly and Company

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"For those companies not involved or just beginning to develop work-life initiatives, this report clearly makes the business case for moving forward. For those companies further along in development of work-life initiatives, this study is a wake-up call to continue in new directions and not become complacent."
—Chris Kjeldsen
Vice President, Community & Workplace Programs, Johnson & Johnson

Conclusion

The 1998 BWLS is the first in an ongoing series of surveys that the Families and Work Institute will use to track the development of company-provided work-life assistance over time. The mere fact that so many companies provide programmatic assistance and supportive work environments indicates that many company executives are aware that meeting the needs of employees not only helps these employees and their families, but also benefits the bottom line.

However, the findings of this study also suggest that many executives still do not share this belief, as evidenced by the small proportions of companies providing many of the benefits, programs, and policies we examined. To the extent that company leadership itself reflects the growing diversity of the workforce—particularly by promoting more women and minorities into top executive positions—one might expect to see an increase in work-life support, as our findings suggest. In addition, however, we believe that rigorous research must continue to provide the necessary independent perspectives that can challenge companies to reexamine the status quo and point them in the direction of potential solutions.

Description of Research

The Families and Work Institute 1998 Business Work-Life Study (BWLS) is one of the first and most comprehensive studies of a representative sample of businesses' responses to the changing workforce. Funded by Allstate Insurance Company, The Chase Manhattan Bank, The Commonwealth Fund, Freddie Mac Foundation, Kaiser Permanente, and Travelers Foundation, it was developed in tandem with the Institute's study of a representative sample of the U.S. labor force, the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce (NSCW).[1]

The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce enabled us to identify the characteristics of life on and off the job most associated with workers' job performance and well-being (Bond, Galinsky, & Swanberg, 1998). In that study, we found:

- The quality of workers' jobs and the supportiveness of their workplaces are the most powerful predictors of job satisfaction, commitment to employers, and retention.
- The characteristics of jobs and workplaces have important repercussions in the personal lives of workers. Employees with more demanding jobs and less supportive workplaces experience more stress, poorer coping, worse moods, and less energy off the job, which jeopardizes their personal and family well-being.
- In turn, when workers' personal and family well-being is compromised by work, they experience more negative spillover from home to work, which diminishes job performance.
- Thus, companies that provide better-quality jobs and more supportive workplaces can not only enhance productivity, but can also affect family health and well-being.

The 1998 BWLS now enables us to assess the extent to which businesses are addressing some of the factors we have identified as central to productivity and workers' stress and well-being. Specifically, we ask:

- To what extent do companies provide work-life programs and policies and supportive workplace environments?

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1. Bond, J. T., Galinsky, E., and Swanberg, J. E. (1998). *The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce*. New York: Families and Work Institute.

- What are the characteristics of companies most likely to provide this support?

Just as we assess changes in the workforce through the National Study of the Changing Workforce on a regular basis, we will also assess changes among employers by conducting a Business Work-Life Study every few years.

1998 BWLS Survey Design and Methodology

The 1998 BWLS surveyed a representative national sample of 1,057 private for-profit (84 percent of sample) and non-profit companies (16 percent of sample) with 100 or more employees in the United States. Companies were randomly selected from lists maintained by Dun and Bradstreet, using a stratified sampling procedure in which selection was proportional to number of people employed by each company. This sampling approach ensured that the number of larger companies included in the sample would be sufficient to support reliable generalizations about companies of all sizes. When analyzing data to make generalizations about the universe of companies with 100 or more employees, the sample is weighted to the distribution of companies of different sizes in the U.S.

Louis Harris and Associates interviewed representatives of selected companies—human resources directors when possible—by telephone in February through March of 1998. The response rate was 45 percent, based on the percentage of all companies on the call-list that completed interviews.

It is important to note that when company representatives indicate that a particular work-family support (benefit, program, policy) is offered, we generally do not know whether all employees have access to this support, much less which groups of employees do and do not have access. Moreover, in the case of flexible work arrangements, the interview questions do not distinguish between formal policies and informal practices, which may or may not be implemented similarly throughout the company. [Note: For reliable data on employee access to benefits, policies, and practices, we rely on data from the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce (Bond, et al, 1998).[2]]

The maximum sampling error for the total sample is ±3 percent at a 95 percent confidence level.

2. The National Study of the Changing Workforce (NSCW) surveys random samples of the U.S. labor force every 5 years. The 1997 sample consists of 2,877 wage and salaried workers employed by companies of all sizes, representing all industries, occupations, and regions of the country.

Characteristics of Sample and Data Analysis

In addition to reporting what percentage of companies provide each type of work-family support, we also investigated which companies are most likely to provide support according to organizational characteristics, characteristics of their workforces, and the business conditions affecting them.

Organizational Characteristics of Companies in the Sample

- Size: 100–249 employees, 250–999 employees, 1,000 or more employees
- Number of Sites in U.S.: fewer than four sites, four–14 sites, 15 or more sites
- Industry: Goods Producing (manufacturing, construction, mining, agriculture, forestry); Professional Services (business, legal, health, education, social, engineering, management); Wholesale and Retail Trades; Finance, Insurance, Real Estate; Other Services (lodging, personal services, auto and other repair services, motion pictures, amusement/recreation services, museums, zoos, membership organizations, etc.)
- Percentage of Top Executive Positions Filled by Women (either the CEO or a direct report to the CEO): none (0 percent), 1–24 percent, 25–49 percent, 50 percent or more
- Percentage of Top Executive Positions Filled by Minorities (either the CEO or a direct report to the CEO): none (0 percent), 1–24 percent, 25–49 percent, 50 or more percent

Table 1 shows the percentages of companies in the survey sample with these organizational characteristics.

Table 1: Organizational Characteristics of Companies in the Survey Sample

Organizational Characteristics	Percentage of Companies
Company Size	
100–249 employees	39%
250–999 employees	36
1,000 or more employees	25
Number of Sites in U.S.	
Fewer than 4 sites	40%
4–14 sites	37
15 or more sites	23
Industry	
Goods producing	30%
Professional services	26
Wholesale and retail Trades	18
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	14
Other services	13
Percentage of Top Executive Positions Filled by Women	
None	30%
1–24 percent	28
25–49 percent	22
50 percent or more	20
Percentage of Top Executive Positions Filled by Minorities	
None	63%
1–24 percent	21
25–49 percent	7
50 percent or more	8

Characteristics of the Workforces of Companies in the Sample

- Women as Percentage of Workforce: less than 40 percent, 40–60 percent, more than 60 percent
- Part-time Employees as Percentage of Workforce: less than 2.5 percent, 2.5–14 percent, 15 percent or more

- Hourly Employees as Percentage of Workforce: less than 58 percent, 58–79 percent, 80 percent or more
- Union Members as Percentage of Workforce: none (0 percent), 1–29 percent, 30 or more percent

Table 2 shows the percentages of companies in the survey sample with these workforce characteristics.

Table 2: Characteristics of the Workforces of Companies in the Sample

Workforce Characteristics	Percentage of Companies
Women as Percentage of Workforce	
Less than 40 percent	32%
40–60 percent	37
More than 60 percent	31
Part-time Employees as Percentage of Workforce	
Less than 2.5 percent	33%
2.5–14 percent	35
15 percent or more	32
Hourly employees as Percentage of Workforce	
Less than 58 percent	33%
58–79 percent	31
80 percent or more	35
Union Members as Percentage of Workforce	
None	78%
1–29 percent	11
30 or more percent	12

Business Conditions

- Downsizing Within Past 12 Months: yes, no
- Difficulty Filling Highly Skilled Positions: somewhat or very easy, somewhat or very difficult

- Difficulty Filling Entry-level, Hourly Positions: somewhat or very easy, somewhat or very difficult
- Financial Performance of Company: better than competitors, about the same as competitors, worse than competitors

Table 3 shows the percentages of companies in the survey sample affected by these business conditions.

Table 3: Business Conditions Affecting Companies in the Sample

Business Conditions	Percentage of Companies
Downsizing Within the Past 12 Months	
Yes	29%
No	71
Difficulty Filling Highly Skilled Positions	
Somewhat or very easy	32%
Somewhat or very difficult	68
Difficulty Filling Entry-Level, Hourly Positions	
Somewhat or very easy	60%
Somewhat or very difficult	40
Financial Performance of Company	
Better than competitors	43%
About the same as competitors	53
Worse than competitors	5

Findings about organizational characteristics, workforce characteristics, and business conditions associated with companies' offering particular work-life supports are only presented when they are statistically significant.[3]

3. Relationships between predictors and work-family supports are reported as significant when they would occur less than once in 100 times by chance ($p < .01$). Non-parametric tests for linear association were used for evaluating cross-tabulations in which both predictors and work-family supports are ordinal scale variables, which represents the vast majority of cross-tabulations with the exception of those including the categorical *industry* variable. When no significant linear relationship is found between ordinal-scale variables, the finding is not reported, even though a significant non-linear relationship may exist. The investigation of such nonlinear relationships requires multivariate analyses that are beyond the scope of this summary report.

The Importance of a Supportive Workplace

In the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce (NSCW), we found that the supportiveness of the workplace environment was strongly linked to both worker productivity and well-being:

- Employees in more supportive workplaces are more satisfied with their jobs than other workers. The more supportive the workplace, the more satisfied the employee.
- Employees with more supportive workplaces are more willing than others to work harder than they have to in order to help their employers succeed.
- Employees whose workplaces are the most supportive and responsive to their individual needs are the most loyal of all employees.
- Employees whose workplaces are more supportive are far less likely than other employees to say they plan to make a genuine effort to find a new job with another employer within the next year.
- Conversely, employees with less-supportive workplaces experience greater job burnout and more negative spillover from their jobs to their home lives than other workers do.

Flexible Work Arrangements

One of the key factors in our measure of the supportiveness of the workplace environment in the 1997 NSCW is flexibility. This includes traditional flextime, daily flextime, time off to care for a sick child, the ability to move from full-time to part-time and back again, and the ability to work at home. The 1998 BWLS provides an opportunity to assess the extent to which companies provide each of these flexible work arrangements.

Traditional Flextime

The 1998 BWLS finds that 68 percent of companies with 100 or more employees allow employees to periodically change starting and quitting times—traditional flextime (Table 4).

Table 4: Traditional Flextime

Employer Characteristic	Allow	Sig.	Do Not Allow
All Companies	68%		32%
Number of Employees		*	
Fewer than 250 *(n=405)*	64%		36%
250–999 *(n=381)*	65		35
1,000 or more*(n=267)*	77		23
Number of Company Sites		**	
Fewer than 4 *(n=423)*	61%		39%
4–14 *(n=395)*	72		28
15 or more *(n=236)*	74		26
Industry		*	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=311)*	59.5%		40.5%
Professional Services *(n=276)*	70		30
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=186)*	68		32
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	75		25
Other Services *(n=137)*	76		24
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		***	
0% *(n=313)*	56%		44%
1%–24% *(n=297)*	70		30
25%–49% *(n=234)*	67		33
50% or more *(n=209)*	82		18
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		***	
0% *(n=665)*	64%		36%
1%–24% *(n=225)*	68		32
25%–49% *(n=77)*	87		13
50% or more *(n=87)*	80.5		19.5
Difficulty in Filling Highly Skilled Positions		**	
Very/Somewhat Easy *(n=331)*	60%		40%
Very/Somewhat Difficult *(n=715)*	71		29

Significance Levels: * = $p<.01$; ** = $p<.001$; *** = $p<.0001$.

- Larger companies, companies with more sites, companies with higher proportions of top executive positions filled by women and/or minorities, and those having more difficulty filling vacancies in skilled positions are more likely to provide traditional

flextime. Among industry groups, companies in the goods-producing industries are least likely to offer this benefit, while companies in finance/insurance/retail and "other services" are most likely.

- Most striking is the finding that 82 percent of companies with half or more of their top executive positions filled by women provide traditional flextime, compared with 56 percent of companies with no women in top positions.

- Among companies not currently offering traditional flextime, 9 percent are considering offering this benefit. These are more likely to be larger companies and companies with fewer women as a percentage of their workforces.

Daily Flextime

Just fewer than one in four companies with 100 or more employees (24 percent) allows employees to change starting and quitting times on a daily basis (Table 5).

- The only predictor of companies' offering daily flextime is having a higher proportion of top executive positions filled by women. Thirty-one percent of companies with half or more top executive positions filled by women offer daily flextime, compared with 23 percent of companies that have no women in top executive positions.

Table 5: Daily Flextime

Employer Characteristic	Allow	Sig.	Do Not Allow
All Companies	24%		76%
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		*	
0% *(n=312)*	23%		77%
Less than 25% *(n=296)*	18		82
25%–49% *(n=236)*	28		72
50% or more *(n=206)*	31		69

Significance Level: * = $p<.01$.

- Among companies that do not currently allow daily flextime, 6 percent are considering doing so. No company characteristics are predictive of companies being more likely to consider providing daily flextime.

Gradual Return to Work after Childbirth or Adoption

Four in five companies (81 percent) allow employees to return to work gradually after childbirth or adoption (Table 6).

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Table 6: Gradual Return after Childbirth or Adoption

Employer Characteristic	Allow	Sig.	Do Not Allow
All Companies	81%		19%
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		*	
0% *(n=312)*	73%		27%
1%–24% *(n=297)*	84		16
25%–49% *(n=224)*	84		16
50% or more *(n=208)*	84		16
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce		*	
0% *(n=770)*	82%		18%
1%–30% *(n=106)*	72		28
30% or more *(n=120)*	74		26
Part-time Workers as Percentage of Workforce		**	
Less than 2.5% *(n=305)*	77%		23%
2.5%–14% *(n=311)*	77.5		22.5
15% or more *(n=295)*	89		11

Significance Levels: * = $p<.01$; ** = $p<.001$.

- Companies with higher proportions of women in top executive positions are more likely than those with lower proportions of women in top positions to offer a gradual return to work, as are companies with smaller proportions of unionized workers and higher proportions of part-time employees.

- Among companies that do not currently allow a gradual return to work, 7 percent are considering it. Those more likely to be considering this option are companies with more sites.

Flexibility in Moving from Full- to Part-time Work

According to the 1998 BWLS, 57 percent of companies with 100 or more employees allow employees to move from full-time to part-time work and back again while remaining in the same position or at the same level (Table 7).

- Companies with more locations, companies with more female employees, companies with fewer unionized employees and with more part-time workers, and those finding it more difficult to fill entry-level/hourly positions are more likely than other companies to offer this flexible work arrangement. Among industry groups, companies in the goods-producing sector are least likely to allow workers to move from full-time to

part-time and back again, while companies in finance/insurance/real estate services and the wholesale/retail trades are most likely.

Table 7: Full-Time to Part-Time and Back

Employer Characteristic	Allow	Sig.	Do Not Allow
All Companies	57%		43%
Number of Company Sites		*	
Fewer than 4 *(n=419)*	52%		48%
4–14*(n=383)*	59		41
15 or more*(n=232)*	64		36
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=308)*	39%		61%
Professional Services *(n=269)*	64		36
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=181)*	67		33
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=139)*	69		31
Other Services *(n=137)*	58		42
Women as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 40% *(n=295)*	40%		60%
40%–60% *(n=331)*	61		39
More than 60% *(n=287)*	68		32
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce		*	
0% *(n=770)*	58%		42%
1%–29% *(n=101)*	54.5		45.5
30% or more *(n=118)*	43		57
Part-time Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 2.5% *(n=305)*	38%		62%
2.5%–14% *(n=310)*	58		42
15% or more *(n=288)*	73		27
Difficulty in Filling Entry-Level/Hourly Positions		*	
Very/Somewhat Easy *(n=621)*	53%		47%
Very/Somewhat Difficult *(n=403)*	62		38

Significance Levels: * = $p<.01$; *** = $p<.0001$.

- Women are far more likely than men to work part-time for periods of time in order to manage work and family responsibilities more effectively—particularly when they have young children. Two-thirds of companies that rely most heavily on women workers offer the opportunity to move from full-time to part-time schedules and back again while remaining in the same position or at the same level in the organization.

- Among companies that do not offer this flexible work arrangement, 5 percent are considering doing so. The only predictor of whether companies are considering offering more flexibility in moving from full- to part-time work is their difficulty in filling entry-level/hourly positions, with 10 percent of such companies considering this option.

Job Sharing

More than one-third of companies with 100 or more employees (37.5 percent) allow employees to share jobs (Table 8).

- Companies with the highest proportions of women and part-time employees in their workforces are much more likely than other companies to allow job sharing.

- Another 16 percent of companies are considering job sharing options. Among the predictors we examined, none is significantly associated with considering this option.

Table 8: Job Sharing

Employer Characteristic	Allow	Sig.	Do Not Allow
All companies	37.5%		62.5%
Women as Percentage of Workforce		**	
Less than 40% *(n=293)*	33%		67%
40%–60% *(n=335)*	31		69
More than 60% *(n=286)*	48		52
Part-time Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 2.5% *(n=305)*	27%		73%
2.5%–14% *(n=314)*	28		72
15% or more *(n=290)*	54.5		45.5

Significance Level: ** = $p<.001$; *** = $p<.0001$.

Occasional Work-at-Home

More than half of the companies surveyed (55 percent) allow employees to work at home occasionally (Table 9).

- Larger companies, companies with more sites, companies with lower proportions of hourly and part-time workers, and those that have downsized in the past 12 months are more likely than others to allow employees to work at home occasionally. Among industry groups, companies in the professional services are most likely to allow employees to work at home occasionally, while companies in the wholesale and retail trades are least likely.

Table 9: Occasional Work at Home

Employer Characteristic	Allow	Sig.	Do Not Allow
All Companies	55%		45%
Number of Employees		**	
Fewer than 250 *(n=405)*	49%		51%
250–999 *(n=379)*	56		44
1,000 or more *(n=268)*	64		36
Number of Company Sites		*	
Fewer than 4 *(n=425)*	50%		50%
4–14 *(n=389)*	59		41
15 or more *(n=237)*	61		39
Industry		**	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=314)*	56%		44%
Professional Services *(n=277)*	64		36
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=184)*	39		61
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	57		43
Other Services *(n=135)*	58.5		42
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 58% *(n=321)*	69.5%		30.5%
58-79% *(n=304)*	58		42
80% or more *(n=341)*	39		61
Part-time Workers as Percentage of Workforce		*	
Less than 2.5% *(n=308)*	58%		42%
2.5%–14% *(n=315)*	57.5		42.5
15% or more *(n=298)*	47		53
Downsizing in the Last 12 Months		**	
Yes *(n=300)*	65%		35%
No *(n=751)*	52		48

*Significance Levels: *p<.01; **p<.001; *** p<.0001.*

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- The difference between companies with large and small proportions of hourly workers is dramatic: 39 percent of the former versus almost 70 percent of the latter allow employees to work at home occasionally. Is part of the explanation that many hourly jobs cannot be performed off-site? Do managers view hourly workers as requiring more direct supervision and monitoring than salaried workers?

- Six percent of companies not currently allowing employees to work at home occasionally are considering this option. Those more likely to be thinking about this option are larger companies and in the goods-producing industries.

Regular Work at Home

One-third of companies (33 percent) allow employees to work at home or at off-site locations on a regular basis, possibly linked by telephone and computers (Table 10).

- Larger companies, companies with smaller proportions of hourly workers, and companies with higher proportions of women and/or minorities in top executive positions are more likely than other companies to allow employees to work at home on a regular basis, as are companies in the goods-producing, professional services, and "other services" industries.

- Another 14 percent of companies are considering a regular work-at-home option. Those most likely to be considering this option are companies in financial/insurance/real estate services, professional services, and goods-producing industries; companies that have higher proportions of executive positions filled by women, smaller proportions of hourly employees, and smaller proportions of part-time employees; and companies that find it more difficult to fill highly skilled positions than other companies. A striking 24 percent of companies with 50 percent or more of its top executive positions filled by women are considering this option.

Table 10: Regular Work at Home

Employer Characteristic	Allow	Sig.	Do Not Allow
All Companies	33%		67%
Number of Employees		***	
Fewer than 250 *(n=405)*	28%		72%
250–999 *(n=381)*	28		72
1,000 or more *(n=267)*	47		53
Industry		*	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=313)*	35.5%		64.5%
Professional Services *(n=274)*	38		62
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=186)*	24		76
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	26		74
Other Services *(n=137)*	36.5		63.5
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		*	
0 % *(n=314)*	27%		73%
1%–24% *(n=298)*	35		65
25%–49% *(n=234)*	33		67
50% or more *(n=208)*	39		61
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		*	
0 % *(n=665)*	29%		71%
1%–24% *(n=225)*	39		61
25%–49% *(n=76)*	35.5		64.5
50% or more *(n=88)*	42		58
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 58% *(n=323)*	41%		59%
58–79% *(n=304)*	33		67
80% or more *(n=343)*	23		77

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; *** = p<.0001.*

Time Off to Attend School and Child Care Functions

The vast majority of companies with 100 or more employees (88 percent) allow employees time off during the workday to attend their children's school or child care functions (Table 11).

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- Companies are more likely to allow employees to take time off to attend school or child care functions when they have higher percentages of women in their workforces. A puzzling finding is that less financially competitive companies are more likely to provide this flexible option.

Table 11: Time Off to Attend Child Care/School Functions

Employer Characteristic	Allow	Sig.	Do Not Allow
All Companies	88%		12%
Women as Percentage of Workforce		*	
Less than 40% *(n=297)*	80.5%		19.5%
40%–60% *(n=343)*	92		8
More than 60% *(n=286)*	89		11
Comparative Financial Performance		**	
Better than Competitors *(n=423)*	84%		16%
Same as Competitors *(n=529)*	90.5		9.5
Worse than Competitors *(n=44)*	98		2

*Significance Levels: * = p<01; ** = p<.001.*

Return on Investments in Flexible Work Arrangement Policies

Very few companies have actually evaluated return on investments in their flexible work arrangement policies. However, by combining human resource directors' personal views with reported findings from evaluations, we constructed a global measure of *perceived return on investment* in flexible work arrangements. Overall, 18 percent of companies perceive the costs of flexible work arrangements as outweighing the benefits, while 36 percent view these policies as cost-neutral and 46 percent perceive benefits as outweighing costs (Table 12).

- Companies with larger proportions of top executive positions filled by women perceive greater returns on their investments in flexible work arrangement policies. Companies in the "other services" category (30 percent) and in goods-producing industries (20 percent) are most likely to perceive the costs of flexible work arrangement policies as outweighing benefits, while companies in finance/insurance/real estate services are least likely.

Table 12: Return on Investments in Flexible Work Arrangements

Employer Characteristic	Costs Outweigh Benefits	Cost Neutral	Benefits Outweigh Costs	Sig.
All Companies	18%	36%	46%	
Industry				**
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=250)*	20%	32%	48%	
Professional Services *(n=217)*	15	36	49	
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=148)*	16	44	40	
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=114)*	10	36	54	
Other Services *(n=111)*	30	37	33	
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women				***
0 % *(n=234)*	22%	39%	40%	
1%–24% *(n=251)*	19	41	40	
25%–49% *(n=191)*	15	34	51	
50% or more *(n=163)*	14	27	59	

Significance Levels: ** = $p<.001$; *** = $p<.0001$.

Summary: Flexible Work Arrangements

Of the eight flexible work arrangements considered, companies with 100 or more employees most frequently allow workers time off to attend school and child care functions (88 percent) and to return to work on a gradual basis following childbirth and adoption (81 percent). More than two-thirds of employers allow traditional flextime, and more than half allow employees to move back and forth from full-time to part-time and to work at home occasionally. Less common are job sharing, regular work at home, and daily flextime. However, job sharing and regular work at home are the flexibility options most likely to be under consideration by companies not currently offering them (Table 13).

Table 13: Flexible Work Arrangements

Does your company allow employees ...	Allow	No, But Considering
To periodically change starting and quitting times?	68%	9%
To change starting and quitting times on a daily basis?	24	7
To return to work gradually after childbirth or adoption?	81	7
To move from full-time to part-time and back again while remaining in the same position or level?	57	5
To share jobs?	37.5	17
To work at home occasionally?	55	6
To work at home or off-site on a regular basis	33	14
To take time off for school/child care functions	88	Not Asked

(n=1057)

Only 18 percent of companies offering one or more flexible work arrangements perceive the costs of their investments in these policies as outweighing the benefits, while 36 percent perceive these programs as cost-neutral and 46 percent perceive a positive return on their investments.

Leaves

In the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce, access to leaves for childbirth, adoption, or to care for sick children is considered a critical component of the flexibility and supportiveness of the workplace environment. As described above, the supportiveness of the workplace environment is strongly associated with workers' job satisfaction, commitment, loyalty, retention, and job performance, as well as their personal well-being. The 1998 BWLS provides an opportunity to assess the extent to which companies offer various types of leave.

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 requires that 12 weeks of unpaid, job-guaranteed leave for childbirth, adoption, foster care placement, a serious personal medical condition, or care of a child or spouse with a serious medical condition be granted to an employee who has worked at least 1,250 hours over the preceding year for an employer with 50 or more employees within a 75-mile radius of the worksite.

Maternity Leave for Childbirth and Early Infant Care

We asked for the maximum length of job-guaranteed leave that companies allow for female employees who give birth to a child, including the period of disability and any other related time (Table 14).

- The median amount of time off for maternity leave among companies with 100 or more employees is 12 weeks, as required by the FMLA. The mean is 17 weeks. However, 9 percent provide fewer than 12 weeks off.

Table 14: Leave for Maternity

Employer Characteristic	Fewer than 12 weeks	12 weeks	13–26 weeks	More than 26 weeks	Sig.
All Companies	9%	58%	25%	8%	
Number of Employees					*
Fewer than 250 *(n=355)*	12%	55%	28%	5%	
250–999 *(n=349)*	9	61	22	8	
1,000 or more *(n=242)*	4	60	26	10	
Industry					***
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=274)*	8%	53%	30%	10%	
Professional Services *(n=252)*	5	65	23	6	
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=171)*	20	55	23	2	
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=139)*	5	62	23	10	
Other Services *(n=108)*	8	56	24	12	
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities					*
0 % *(n=595)*	9%	62%	23%	6%	
1%–24% *(n=196)*	7	55	29	10	
25%–49% *(n=65)*	14	48	26	12	
50% or more *(n=88)*	9	49	32	10	
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce					**
0% *(n=706)*	10%	60%	23%	7%	
1%–29% *(n=96)*	7	49	31	13	
30% or more *(n=102)*	5	54	28	13	

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; ** = p<.01; *** = p<.0001.*

- Of those companies offering fewer than 12 weeks' leave, only 1 percent are clearly out of compliance by virtue of having a single location with 100 or more employees. It is

likely that others are out of compliance as well; however, data available from the survey do not permit accurate estimates.

- One-third of companies allow new mothers more than 12 weeks leave: 25 percent between 13 and 26 weeks and 8 percent more than 26 weeks.

- Companies with more employees in the U.S. and those with larger proportions of unionized workers tend to offer longer leaves. Companies with at least some top executive positions filled by minorities are more likely to offer leaves longer than 12 weeks. Among industry groups, companies in the goods-producing sector, finance/insurance/real estate service, and "other services" tend to offer the most generous leaves, while companies in the wholesale and retail trades offer the least generous.

Replacement Pay during Maternity Leave

Just more than half (53 percent) of mothers on leave after giving birth receive some replacement pay, excluding vacation days, accrued sick days, or other paid personal time off (Table 15).

- Companies in the goods-producing industries (largely manufacturing) are most likely to provide replacement pay during maternity leave, while companies in the professional services and wholesale/retail trades are least likely. Companies with smaller proportions of top executive positions filled by women; smaller proportions of women, hourly, and part-time employees in their workforces; and larger proportions of unionized workers are also more likely to offer replacement pay than other companies.

- Of companies providing replacement pay during leaves for maternity, 27 percent provide full pay and 60 percent partial pay, while another 13 percent report that "It depends."

- Companies with higher proportions of unionized workers are more likely than other companies to provide full pay. Indeed, 33 percent of companies whose workforces are 30 percent or more unionized provide full pay.

- Replacement pay is usually funded (81 percent of companies) by a general temporary disability insurance plan.

- Companies most likely to provide pay through temporary disability insurance have fewer part-time employees as a percentage of their workforces and report that their financial performance is better than their competitors'. Among industry groups, companies in the professional services and wholesale/retail trades are least likely to fund replacement pay using temporary disability insurance, while companies in the goods-producing industries are most likely to do so.

Table 15: Pay during Childbirth Leave for Mothers

Employer Characteristic	Full/Part Pay	Sig.	No Pay
All Companies	53%		47%
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=277)*	66%		34%
Professional Services *(n=266)*	44		56
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=175)*	46		54
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=140)*	54		46
Other Services *(n=113)*	50		50
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		*	
0% *(n=284)*	56%		44%
1%–24% *(n=277)*	56		44
25%–49% *(n=219)*	56		44
50% or more *(n=192)*	41		59
Women as Percentage of Workforce		*	
Less than 40% *(n=270)*	59%		41%
40%–60% *(n=326)*	51		49
More than 60% *(n=266)*	46		54
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce		*	
0% *(n=726)*	51%		49%
1%–29% *(n=95)*	56		44
30% or more *(n=107)*	66		34
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 58% *(n=299)*	60%		40%
58–79% *(n=286)*	58		42
80% or more *(n=310)*	42		58
Part-time Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 2.5% *(n=285)*	67%		33%
2.5%–14% *(n=295)*	55		45
15% or more *(n=275)*	34.5		65.5

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; *** = p<.0001.*

Paternity Leave for Fathers

The FMLA requirements for paternity leave are the same as those for maternity leave—12 weeks of unpaid, job-guaranteed time off.

- According to the 1998 BWLS, the median amount of job-guaranteed leave that companies with 100 or more employees allow male employees whose partners give birth to a child is 12 weeks, as required by the FMLA. The mean is 14 weeks.
- Ten percent of companies report providing fewer than 12 weeks of paternity leave, with 2 percent of the sample clearly out of compliance with the FMLA. The total percentage not complying with the FMLA cannot be estimated accurately given data available from the survey.
- On the other hand, 13 percent of companies offer 13 through 26 weeks of paternity leave, and another 3 percent allow more than 26 weeks (Table 16).
- Companies with more than 250 employees and with larger proportions of unionized workers are more likely to offer at least 12 weeks of paternity leave. Companies with at least some top executive positions filled by minorities are more likely to offer paternity leaves longer than 12 weeks. Although paternity leaves of fewer than 12 weeks are most common in the wholesale/retail trades, so are leaves longer than 12 weeks.

Table 16: Leave for Paternity

Employer Characteristic	Fewer than 12 weeks	12 weeks	13–26 weeks	More than 26 weeks	Sig.
All Companies	10%	74%	13%	3%	
Number of Employees					*
Fewer than 250 *(n=314)*	15%	70%	13%	2%	
250–999 *(n=325)*	8	77	12	3	
1,000 or more *(n=230)*	6	76	14	4	
Industry					***
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=263)*	12%	75%	11%	3%	
Professional Services *(n=232)*	5	81	12	3	
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=146)*	19	62	19	1	
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=125)*	6	75	16	2	
Other Services *(n=101)*	6	73	12	9	
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities					***
0 % *(n=555)*	10%	78%	11%	1%	
1%–24% *(n=175)*	7	73	17	3	
25%–49% *(n=66)*	18	56	18	8	
50% or more *(n=73)*	7	66	16	11	
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce					***
0% *(n=637)*	11%	74%	12%	2%	
1%–29% *(n=92)*	7	74	15	4	
30% or more *(n=99)*	3	74	15	8	

Significance Levels: * = $p<.01$; *** = $p<.0001$.

Pay during Paternity Leave

Although men are obviously ineligible for disability pay when they take parental leaves after their partners give birth to a child, 13 percent of companies do provide wage replacement for at least part of paternity leaves beyond that available from accrued vacation days, sick days, or other paid personal time off (Table 17).

- Interestingly, smaller companies are more likely than larger companies to provide replacement pay for men when their partners give birth, as are companies that have at least some minorities in top executive positions.

Table 17: Pay During Paternity Leave

Employer Characteristic	Full/Part Pay	Sig.	No Pay
All companies	13%		87%
Number of Employees		**	
Fewer than 250 *(n=329)*	20%		80%
250–999 *(n=340)*	8		92
1,000 or more *(n=235)*	11		89
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		***	
0 % *(n=574)*	9%		91%
1%–24% *(n=183)*	18		82
25%–49% *(n=69)*	26		74
50% or more *(n=78)*	18		82

Significance Level: ** = $p<.001$; *** = $p<.0001$.

Leave for Adoption and Foster Care Placement

The FMLA requirements for adoption or foster care placement leave are the same as those for maternity and paternity leave—12 weeks of unpaid, job-guaranteed time off.

- The median amount of job-guaranteed leave that companies with 100 or more employees allow male and female employees caring for newly adopted children or newly placed foster children is 12 weeks, as required by the FMLA. The mean is 14 weeks—comparable to the mean length of paternity leave. Ten percent of companies allow fewer than 12 weeks, while 16 percent allow more (Table 18).

- Companies with 1,000 or more employees, 50 percent or more of top executive positions filled by women, 30 percent or more unionized employees, and 58 percent or fewer hourly workers are more likely to provide at least 12 weeks for adoption or foster care leaves. Companies with at least some top executive positions filled by minorities are more likely to provide more than 12 weeks' leave. The most striking difference among industries is that 22 percent of companies in the wholesale and retail trades provide fewer than 12 weeks' leave.

Table 18: Leave for Adoption

Employer Characteristic	Fewer than 12 weeks	12 weeks	13–26 weeks	More than 26 weeks	Sig.
All Companies	10%	74.5%	13%	3%	
Number of Employees					*
Fewer than 250 *(n=326)*	14%	70%	14%	2%	
250–999 *(n=336)*	10	77	12	2	
1,000 or more *(n=241)*	4	78	12	5	
Industry					***
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=263)*	10%	78%	10%	2%	
Professional Services *(n=246)*	5	81	11	4	
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=157)*	22	61	17	1	
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=137)*	5	76	15	4	
Other Services *(n=99)*	8	72	12	8	
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women					***
0% *(n=258)*	11%	78%	10%	2%	
1%–24% *(n=255)*	10	76	13	1	
25%–49% *(n=207)*	11	75	12	1	
50% or more *(n=181)*	7	68	16	10	
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities					***
0 % *(n=574)*	11%	79%	10%	1%	
1%–24% *(n=188)*	7	73	16	4	
25%–49% *(n=63)*	11	59	19	11	
50% or more *(n=77)*	9	60	21	10	
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce					*
0% *(n=674)*	11%	75%	13%	2%	
1%–29% *(n=90)*	10	72	13	4	
30% or more *(n=104)*	5	76	12	8	
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce					**
Less than 58% *(n=287)*	3%	79%	14%	4%	
58–79% *(n=262)*	15	71	11	2	
80% or more *(n=281)*	14	73	12	2	

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; ** = p<.001; *** = p<.0001.*

Pay during Adoption and Foster Care Leave

Overall, 12.5 percent of companies provide some replacement pay for employees on leave for adoption and foster care placement (Table 19).

Companies in the finance/insurance/real estate and "other services" industries are twice as likely as companies in other industries to provide at least some replacement pay. Similarly, companies with at least some top executive positions filled by minorities are about twice as likely as companies with no minorities in top positions to provide full or partial replacement pay during leaves for adoption and foster care placements.

Table 19: Pay during Leave for Adoption

Employer Characteristic	Full/Part Pay	Sig.	No Pay
All Companies	12.5%		87.5%
Industry		**	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=272)*	11%		89%
Professional Services *(n=254)*	9		91
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=147)*	9.5		90.5
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=137)*	20		80
Other Services *(n=104)*	21		79
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		**	
0% *(n=586)*	9%		91%
1%–24% *(n=191)*	19		81
25%–49% *(n=63)*	25		75
50% or more *(n=75)*	13		87

Significance Levels: ** = $p<.001$.

Leave to Care for Seriously Ill Children

The medical leave provisions of the FMLA cover leaves for serious medical conditions of workers, their children, and their spouses. The 1998 BWLS only asked about leaves to care for seriously ill children. As with other leaves, the FMLA provides for 12 weeks of unpaid, job-guaranteed time off.

- The median amount of unpaid, job-guaranteed leave that companies with 100 or more employees allow male and female employees to care for seriously ill children is 12 weeks, as required by the FMLA. The mean is 14 weeks.

- Seven percent allow fewer than 12 weeks, 78 percent allow 12 weeks, and 15 percent allow more (Table 20).

- Companies with larger proportions of top executive positions filled by minorities and larger proportions of union members tend to offer leaves longer than 12 weeks to care for a seriously ill child.

Table 20: Leave to Care for Seriously Ill Child

Employer Characteristic	Fewer than 12 weeks	12 weeks	13–26 weeks	More than 26 weeks	Sig.
All Companies	7%	78%	11%	4%	
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities					*
0 % *(n=570)*	7%	80%	10%	3%	
1%–24% *(n=181)*	8	77	11	3	
25%–49% *(n=62)*	3	65	21	11	
50% or more *(n=78)*	6	74	12	8	
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce					*
0% *(n=655)*	8%	78%	10%	3%	
1%–29% *(n=93)*	3	76	13	8	
30% or more *(n=108)*	5	76	12	7	

Significance Level: * = $p<.01$.

Time Off for Mildly Ill Children

According to the 1998 BWLS, 49 percent of companies with 100 or more employees allow employees to take a few days off work to care for a mildly ill child without using vacation days and without losing pay (Table 21).

- Financial service, insurance, and real estate companies; companies with larger proportions of unionized employees and smaller proportions of hourly employees; and companies that find vacancies in skilled positions difficult to fill are more likely than other companies to allow employees time off to care for mildly ill children without losing pay. Fully 65 percent of companies with 30 percent or more unionized workers and 63 percent of those in the finance/insurance/real estate industries allow employees to take paid time off to care for mildly ill children.

Table 21: Time Off to Care for Mildly Ill Children Without Using Vacation Days or Losing Pay

Employer Characteristic	Allow	Sig.	Do Not Allow
All Companies	49%		51%
Industry		*	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=305)*	45%		55%
Professional Services *(n=271)*	48		52
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=180)*	43		57
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=140)*	63		37
Other Services *(n=132)*	51.5		48.5
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce		**	
0% *(n=759)*	46%		54%
1%–29% *(n=105)*	47		53
30% or more *(n=121)*	65		35
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 58% *(n=319)*	56%		44%
58–79% *(n=301)*	52		48
80% or more *(n=328)*	36		64
Difficulty in Filling Highly Skilled Positions		*	
Very/Somewhat Easy *(n=322)*	42%		58%
Very/Somewhat Difficult *(n=701)*	51.5		48.5

*Significance Levels: *p<.01; **p<.001; *** p<.0001.*

- Among companies allowing a specific number of days, the median is 6 days per year and the mean is 11. Nine percent of companies allow employees "as much time as needed," and 25 percent say, "It depends."

Return on Investments in Family Leave Policies

Very few companies have actually evaluated return on investments in their family leave policies. Undoubtedly this is due in large part to the fact that most adhere to the minimum leave policies required by federal law. However, by combining human resource directors' personal views with reported findings from evaluations, we constructed a global measure of *perceived return on investment* in family leave arrangements. Overall, 17 percent of companies perceive the costs of family leave policies as outweighing the benefits, while 42 percent view these policies as cost-neutral and 42 percent perceive benefits as outweighing costs (Table 22).

- Companies with larger proportions of top executive positions filled by women and with lower proportions of hourly workers perceive greater returns on their investments in family leave policies than other companies.
- Companies in the wholesale and retail trades are least likely to perceive the costs of family leave policies as outweighing benefits; however, they are also least likely to perceive benefits as outweighing costs, believing instead that these policies are cost-neutral.

Table 22: Return on Investments in Family Leave Policies

Employer Characteristic	Costs Outweigh Benefits	Cost Neutral	Benefits Outweigh Costs	Sig.
All Companies	17%	42%	42%	
Industry				**
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=278)*	18%	44%	38%	
Professional Services *(n=249)*	19	35	46	
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=158)*	10	58	32	
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=127)*	17	35	49	
Other Services *(n=113)*	18	35	47	
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women				***
0 % *(n=270)*	19%	47%	34%	
1%–24% *(n=268)*	15	49	37	
25%–49% *(n=208)*	19	38	43	
50% or more *(n=179)*	15	27	59	
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce				*
Less than 58% *(n=281)*	14%	38%	48%	
58–79% *(n=280)*	20	38	42	
80% or more *(n=290)*	19	45	36	
Difficulty in Filling Entry-Level/Hourly Positions				*
Very/Somewhat Easy *(n=556)*	14%	42%	44%	
Very/Somewhat Difficult *(n=362)*	21	41	38	

Significance Levels: * = $p<.01$; ** = $p<.001$; *** = $p<.0001$.

- Curiously, companies that find it easier to hire hourly, entry-level workers perceive greater returns on their investments in family leave policies than companies that have greater difficulty hiring these workers. Conceivably this is because companies that find

it easier to hire hourly, entry level workers have family leave policies that aid recruitment and retention.

Summary: Leave Policies

Across the four types of leave examined, 7 percent through 10 percent of companies with 100 or more employees provide fewer than 12 weeks of leave, while 15 percent through 33 percent provide 13 weeks or more. It appears that companies see maternity leave as the most deserving type of leave, as maximum leave periods are longer on average for maternity than for other reasons (Table 23).

Among companies offering less than the 12 weeks of unpaid, job-guaranteed leave required by the FMLA, 2 percent or fewer are *clearly* out of compliance with the law, based on having only one site with 100 or more employees. Although additional companies are likely to be out of compliance, survey data do not permit accurate estimates of the number. Some companies, of course, may be exempt from FMLA requirements—such as a portion of the 37 percent of companies in the sample with fewer than 50 employees per site on average. Indeed, it may well be that the number of exempt companies that comply with the law is larger than the number of nonexempt companies that fail to comply.

Table 23: Summary of Leave Policies

Leave Policy	Fewer than 12 Weeks	12 Weeks	13–26 Weeks	More than 26 Weeks	Median and Mean Number of Weeks
Maternity Leave	9%	58%	25%	8%	Median: 12 wks Mean: 17 wks
Paternity Leave	10	74	13	3	Median: 12 wks Mean: 14 wks
Adoption, Foster Care Leave	10	74.5	13	3	Median: 12 wks Mean: 14 wks
Care of Seriously Ill Children Leave	7	78	11	4	Median: 12 wks Mean: 14 wks

Although women on leave for maternity are more likely to receive some replacement pay than workers taking leaves for other reasons, this is not necessarily another indicator that maternity leave is viewed as more deserved. Indeed, this pattern of differences in the likelihood of replacement pay is most likely a product of 1) having a temporary disability insurance plan and 2) the federal Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA) of 1978, which requires that maternity-related disability be treated like other

disabilities under insurance plans. For 81 percent of companies, pay during maternity leave is funded by their temporary disability insurance plans.

Table 24: At Least Some Replacement Pay during Leave

Leave Policy	At Least Some Replacement Pay
Maternity Leave	53%
Paternity Leave	13
Adoption/Foster Care Leave	12.5

Only 17 percent of companies think the costs of leave programs exceed the benefits, while 42 percent think leave programs are cost-neutral and another 42 percent perceive a positive return on investment in these programs.

Use of Flexible Time and Leave Policies Without Jeopardizing Advancement

Studies have shown that the mere presence or absence of flexible time and leave policies does not reveal whether employees can or will make flexible work arrangements or take leaves. On the one hand, supervisors may stand in the way of policy implementation or there may be a company culture that frowns on policy usage. On the other, employees who work for companies that do not have formal flexible time and leave policies may be able to take time off work without jeopardy when they need to. Company representatives—typically human-resource directors—were asked to indicate how true the following statement is: "Men and women who use flexible time and leave policies are not jeopardizing their chances for promotion."

- Only 10 percent of company representatives responding to the 1998 BWLS survey feel that the use of flexible time and leave policies jeopardizes employees' opportunities for advancement (Table 25). In contrast, the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce found that among employees of private-sector companies with 100 or more employees nationally, 40 percent agreed somewhat or strongly that using flexible schedules and taking time off for family reasons impede job advancement. Although the questions were not identical in the two surveys, the discrepancy between employers' and employees' views is large enough to conclude that there is significant disagreement. Do human-resource directors exaggerate how family-friendly their companies are in order to appear progressive? Probably so. Do employees exaggerate

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the risks of using flexible schedules and taking time off for family reasons? Maybe, but their motivations for doing so are unclear.

- Representatives of companies with higher percentages of top executive positions filled by women and minorities were less likely than representatives of other companies to feel that using flexible time and leave policies harms employees' chances for advancement.

Table 25: Employees Can Use Flexible Time and Leave Without Jeopardizing Their Chances for Promotion

Employer Characteristic	Very True	Somewhat True	Not Very True/Not True At All	Sig.
All Companies	75%	16%	10%	
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women				*
0% *(n=296)*	69%	19%	12%	
1%–24% *(n=281)*	74	15	10	
25%–49% *(n=228)*	75	15	9	
50% or more *(n=203)*	82	12	6	
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities				*
0% *(n=639)*	73%	15%	12%	
1%–24% *(n=221)*	75	20	5	
25%–49% *(n=69)*	81	12	7	
50% or more *(n=81)*	84	12	4	

Significance Level: * = $p<.01$.

Child Care Assistance

Child care needs come in myriad forms, and many employed parents use the flexible time and leave options examined above to meet these needs. In this section, we examine benefits, policies, community investments, and partnerships that focus specifically on child care while parents are on the job and not caring for their own children. Data from the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce reveal that 20 percent of employees who work for companies with 100 or more employees have children under six years of age, while 34 percent have children under 13 years and 45

percent have children under 18. In short, child care issues of one sort or another affect very large numbers of workers in companies of the size examined here.

Child Care Resource and Referral

More than one-third of companies with 100 or more employees (36 percent) provide employees with access to information to help them locate child care in the community (Table 26).

Table 26: Child Care Resource and Referral

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	36%		64%
Number of Employees		***	
Fewer than 250 *(n=408)*	24%		76%
250–999 *(n=377)*	38.5		61.5
1,000 or more *(n=267)*	50		50
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=314)*	39%		61%
Professional Services *(n=274)*	33		67
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=186)*	25		75
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=144)*	50		50
Other Services *(n=134)*	35		65
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		**	
0% *(n=311)*	30%		70%
1%–24% *(n=298)*	33		67
25%–49% *(n=237)*	40.5		59.5
50% or more *(n=207)*	43.5		56.5
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		***	
0% *(n=665)*	32%		68%
1%–24% *(n=225)*	36		64
25%–49% *(n=76)*	53		47
50% or more *(n=85)*	49		51

Significance Levels: ** = $p<.001$; *** = $p<.0001$.

- Companies are more likely to provide assistance to employees in finding child care when they have more employees, when they are in the financial/insurance/real estate services industries and when they have higher proportions of executive positions filled by women or minorities. Indeed, 50 percent of companies with 1,000 or more employees offer this benefit, compared with only 24 percent of companies that have fewer than 250 employees. Similarly, 50 percent of companies in finance/insurance/real estate offer this benefit, compared with 25 percent in the wholesale and retail trades.

- Among those companies not providing child care resource and referral, 12 percent report that they are considering doing so. Those more likely to be considering this service are larger and have more of their top executive positions filled by women.

On- or Near-Site Child Care

When people think of employer assistance with child care, an on- or near-site center often comes to mind. In reality, company needs assessments often reveal that not many employees want child care at work, and not many employers want to provide it. Where it is feasible and desired, however, child care at the workplace is highly appreciated and has been linked to less worry about child care while at work and greater satisfaction with the quality of child care children receive (Families and Work Institute, 1993).

Nine percent of companies with 100 or more employees provide child care at or near worksites (Table 27).

- Larger companies and those with higher proportions of top executive positions filled by women or minorities are more likely to provide on- or near-site child care than other companies. Six times more companies with half or more of their top executive positions filled by women provide on- or near-site child care than companies that have no women in top positions. The highest incidence of on- or near-site care (26 percent) is found among companies with 50 percent or more of top positions filled by minorities. Companies in goods-producing industries and the wholesale and retail trades are less likely than companies in other industries to provide this benefit.

- Among companies providing worksite child care, 59 percent have one center, 26 percent have between two and five centers, and 15 percent have more than five centers.

- The typical company providing any worksite child care has centers at two-thirds (67 percent) of its sites. Child care coverage ranges from less than 1 percent to 100 percent of sites. Among companies with any worksite child care, the percentage of sites having child care centers appears to decline dramatically as the number of company locations increases. The typical company with fewer than four sites has centers at all locations (100 percent); the typical company with from four through 14 sites has centers at 20

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percent of them; and the typical company with 15 or more sites has centers at only 4 percent of them. Thus, providing worksite child care *at all* should not be interpreted as providing it *for all*.

Table 27: On- or Near-Site Child Care

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	9%		91%
Number of Employees		***	
Fewer than 250 *(n=407)*	7%		93%
250–999 *(n=379)*	5		95
1,000 or more *(n=268)*	17.5		82.5
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=314)*	5%		95%
Professional Services *(n=274)*	15		85
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=186)*	3		97
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	11		89
Other Services *(n=137)*	10		90
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		***	
0% *(n=313)*	3%		97%
1%–24% *(n=298)*	6		94
25%–49% *(n=236)*	10		90
50% or more *(n=206)*	19		81
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		***	
0% *(n=667)*	6%		94%
1%–24% *(n=225)*	9		91
25%–49% *(n=77)*	14		86
50% or more *(n=85)*	26		74

Significance Level: *** = $p<.0001$.

- Among companies that do not provide child care at or near the worksite, 12 percent are considering doing so. Companies more likely to be considering this option have higher proportions of top executive positions filled by women and larger percentages of women in their workforces. In companies with 50 percent or more of their top executive position filled by women, 22 percent are considering worksite child care, compared with 7 percent of companies with no women in top positions.

Vouchers or Direct Subsidies for Child Care

Five percent of companies with 100 or more employees provide payment for child care with vouchers or other subsidies that have direct costs to the company (Table 28).

Table 28: Vouchers or Direct Subsidies for Child Care

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	5%		95%
Number of Employees		**	
Fewer than 250 *(n=407)*	3%		97%
250–999 *(n=380)*	5.5		94.5
1,000 or more*(n=268)*	9		91
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=312)*	3%		97%
Professional Services *(n=276)*	10.5		89.5
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=186)*	2		98
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=144)*	5		95
Other Services *(n=137)*	6		94
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		***	
0% *(n=314)*	2.5%		97.5%
1%–24% *(n=296)*	4		96
25%–49% *(n=237)*	3		97
50% or more *(n=208)*	13		87
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		***	
0% *(n=664)*	3%		97%
1%–24% *(n=225)*	8		92
25%–49% *(n=76)*	14.5		85.5
50% or more *(n=87)*	8		92
Women as Percentage of Workforce		**	
Less than 40% *(n=295)*	1%		99%
40%–60% *(n=344)*	5.5		94.5
More than 60% *(n=290)*	7		93

Significance Levels: ** = $p<.001$; *** = $p<.0001$.

- Companies with more employees, companies that provide professional services, companies with larger proportions of top executive positions filled by women and minorities, and companies with larger proportions of women in their workforces are more likely than other companies to provide vouchers or other subsidies for child care.

- Among companies not currently providing vouchers or other subsidies for child care that have direct costs to the company, 5 percent are considering doing so. Companies in the goods-producing, finance/ insurance/real estate, and "other services" industries are most likely to be considering these options.

Dependent Care Assistance Plans

Dependent-care assistance plans (DCAPs) are sometimes called flexible spending accounts. These plans, which are administered by employers, allow employees to set aside wages on a pretax basis to reimburse up to $5,000 a year in child care or other qualified dependent-care expenses. The advantage of DCAPs is that they allow employees to use pretax dollars, thus having more money to spend. The disadvantages are that employees must be able to pay for care out of after-tax earnings while waiting for reimbursements, must have enough tax liability to realize a tax savings, and must use the full amount they have agreed to set aside per year or forfeit this money ("use it or lose it").

Fifty percent of companies with 100 or more employees provide dependent-care assistance plans (Table 29).

- Those companies more likely to provide DCAPs are larger, have more sites, are in the financial/insurance/real estate services, have a greater proportion of their executive positions filled by women, and have lower proportions of hourly employees in their workforces than other companies. Most striking is that fully 71 percent of companies with 1,000 or more employees in the U.S. provide DCAPs.

Table 29: DCAPs for Child Care

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	50%		50%
Number of Employees		***	
Fewer than 250 *(n=405)*	34%		66%
250–999 *(n=377)*	54		46
1,000 or more *(n=267)*	71		29
Number of Company Sites		***	
Fewer than 4 *(n=422)*	44.5%		55.5%
4–14 *(n=392)*	49		51
15 or more *(n=235)*	64		36
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=309)*	48%		52%
Professional Services *(n=276)*	54		46
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=184)*	38		62
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	68		32
Other Services *(n=137)*	47		53
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		***	
0% *(n=311)*	37%		63%
1%–24% *(n=293)*	53		47
25%–49% *(n=237)*	56.5		43.5
50% or more *(n=209)*	60		40
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 58% *(n=323)*	62%		38%
58%–79% *(n=302)*	55		45
80% or more *(n=341)*	32		68

Significance Level: *** = $p<.0001$.

Reimbursement of Child Care Costs for Working Late

Four percent of companies with 100 or more employees reimburse the costs of employees' child care when employees work late (Table 30).

- The companies most likely to reimburse the child care costs of employees who work late are those with half or more of their executive positions filled by women and those finding vacancies in skilled as well as in entry-level/hourly jobs easy to fill. The latter findings seem counterintuitive. Are job vacancies easier to fill because of the attractiveness of this benefit?

Table 30: Reimbursement of Child Care Costs for Working Late

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	4%		96%
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		*	
0% *(n=306)*	2%		98%
1%–24% *(n=292)*	5		95
25%–49% *(n=232)*	2		98
50% or more *(n=208)*	9		91
Difficulty in Filling Vacancies in Highly Skilled Jobs		*	
Very/Somewhat Easy *(n=326)*	7%		93%
Very/Somewhat Difficult *(n=710)*	3		97
Difficulty in Filling Vacancies in Entry-Level/Hourly Jobs		**	
Very/Somewhat Easy *(n=617)*	6%		94%
Very/Somewhat Difficult *(n=413)*	2		98

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; ** = p<.001.*

Reimbursement of Child Care Costs for Travel

Six percent of companies with 100 or more employees reimburse employees' child care expenses when employees travel for business (Table 31).

- The companies most likely to reimburse the costs of child care for business travel are those that find it easy to fill vacancies in entry-level and hourly jobs. As with the previous finding, this also seems counterintuitive. Why would this benefit be associated with ease in filling entry-level/hourly positions when employees in these positions are least likely to spend nights away from home on business travel, according to the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce?

Table 31: Reimbursement of Child Care Costs for Travel

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	6%		94%
Difficulty in Filling Vacancies in Entry-Level/Hourly Jobs		*	
Very/Somewhat Easy *(n=610)*	8%		92%
Very/Somewhat Difficult *(n=402)*	3.5		96.5

*Significance Level: * = p<.01.*

Child Care for School-Age Children on Vacation

Six percent of companies with 100 or more employees provide child care at one or more company locations for school-age children on vacation (Table 32).

- Companies more likely to offer vacation care for the school-age children of employees are in the professional services industry, have larger proportions of top executive positions filled by women, and have larger proportions of women and part-time employees in their workforces.

Table 32: Vacation Care

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	6%		94%
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=311)*	4.5%		95.5%
Professional Services *(n=276)*	13		87
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=186)*	2		98
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	3		97
Other Services *(n=137)*	7		93
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		***	
0% *(n=314)*	2%		98%
1%–24% *(n=296)*	6		94
25%–49% *(n=236)*	4		96
50% or more *(n=208)*	17		83
Women as Percentage of Workforce		**	
Less than 40% *(n=295)*	2%		98%
40%–60% *(n=343)*	9		91
More than 60% *(n=289)*	8		92
Part-Time Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 2.5% *(n=305)*	2%		98%
2.5%–14% *(n=319)*	6		94
15% or more *(n=298)*	10		90

Significance Levels: ** = $p<.001$; *** = $p<.0001$.

- The typical company offering care during school vacations provides care at all of its sites. This is true regardless of the number of sites a company has.

- Among companies not providing vacation care for the school-age children of employees, 2.5 percent report considering this service. None of the predictors we examined is significant.

Backup or Emergency Care

Four percent of companies with 100 or more employees provide backup or emergency care for employees when their regular child care arrangements fall apart (Table 33).

- Companies more likely to provide backup or emergency care for employees when their regular child care arrangements fall apart have 1,000 or more employees and/or have downsized in the past 12 months.

- The typical company offering backup or emergency care provides it at all its sites. This is true regardless of the number of sites a company has.

Table 33: Backup or Emergency Care

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	4%		96%
Number of Employees		*	
Fewer than 250 *(n=407)*	3%		97%
250–999 *(n=379)*	3		97
1,000 or more *(n=267)*	8		92
Downsizing in the Last 12 Months		*	
Yes *(n=302)*	7%		93%
No *(n=751)*	3		97

*Significance Levels: *p<.01.*

- Among companies that do not provide backup or emergency care, 5 percent are considering it. Companies with higher proportions of top executive positions filled by minorities are more likely to be considering this option.

Sick-Child Care

Five percent of companies with more than 100 employees provide care for the mildly ill children of employees (Table 34).

- Companies that are larger and/or have downsized in the past 12 months are more likely to provide sick-child care than other companies.

- The typical company offering sick-child care provides such care at all of its sites; however, companies are less likely to provide coverage at all sites as the number of sites increases.

Table 34: Sick-Child Care

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	5%		95%
Number of Employees		*	
Fewer than 250 *(n=405)*	3.5%		96.5%
250–999 *(n=379)*	5		95
1,000 or more *(n=262)*	9		91
Downsizing in the Last 12 Months		*	
Yes *(n=302)*	9%		91%
No *(n=744)*	4		96

Significance Levels: *$p<.01$.

- Three percent of companies not currently offering sick-child care are considering it. Those most likely to be considering this option are companies with 1,000 or more employees and companies with higher proportions of top executive positions filled by minorities.

Capacity of Child Care Programs

Among companies with 100 or more employees that offer at least one direct child care service (on-/near-site care, vacation care, emergency/backup care, sick-child care), 17 percent said these programs have more than enough capacity to serve the children of employees *at sites where programs are offered.* Fifty-six percent say they have about the right capacity, and 27 percent say they have less than enough (Table 35).[4]

- Companies with smaller proportions of top executive positions filled by minorities and with larger proportions of women and part-time workers tend to have less capacity than needed. Companies that find it difficult to hire entry-level, hourly workers and those that are doing worse financially than their competitors are also more likely than other companies to have less capacity than needed.

4. As can be seen in Table 35, the sample size is greatly reduced in these analyses since so few companies offer direct child care services. Nevertheless, statistical tests revealed a number of significant differences that would occur less than 1 time in 100 by chance.

Table 35: Capacity of Child Care Programs

Employer Characteristic	More than Enough Capacity	About the Right Capacity	Not Enough Capacity	Sig.
All Companies	17%	56%	27%	
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities				•
0% *(n=67)*	27%	49%	24%	
1%–24% *(n=27)*	15	70	15	
25%–49% *(n=17)*	0	41	59	
50% or more *(n=20)*	0	70	30	
Women as Percentage of Workforce				•••
Less than 40% *(n=21)*	52%	48%	0%	
40%–60% *(n=47)*	17	51	32	
More than 60% *(n=49)*	6	57	37	
Part-Time Workers as Percentage of Workforce				•
Less than 2.5% *(n=23)*	26%	57%	17%	
2.5%–14% *(n=36)*	22	58	19	
15% or more *(n=51)*	6	57	37	
Difficulty in Filling Entry-Level/Hourly Positions				•
Very/Somewhat Easy *(n=91)*	21%	60%	19%	
Very/Somewhat Difficult *(n=39)*	8	46	46	
Comparative Financial Performance				•
Better than Competitors *(n=55)*	24%	58%	18%	
Same as Competitors *(n=57)*	11	54	35	
Worse than Competitors *(n=11)*	0	54.5	45.5	

Significance Levels: • = $p<.01$; ••• = $p<.0001$.

Financial Support for Local Child Care

Nine percent of companies with 100 or more employees provide financial support for local child care through a fund or corporate contributions beyond the United Way (Table 36).

•• Larger companies are more likely than smaller companies to support local child care through child care funds or corporate contributions, as are companies with larger proportions of top executive positions filled by minorities.

Table 36: Financial Support for Local Child Care

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	9%		91%
Number of Employees		*	
Fewer than 250 *(n=396)*	6%		94%
250–999 *(n=371)*	9		91
1,000 or more *(n=262)*	13		87
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		***	
0% *(n=649)*	6%		94%
1%–24% *(n=221)*	11		89
25%–49% *(n=76)*	13		87
50% or more *(n=84)*	18		82

Significance Level: * = $p<.01$; *** = $p<.0001$.

Public-Private Partnerships in Child Care

Five percent of companies with 100 or more employees are involved in public-private partnerships focusing on child care (Table 37).

- Companies with larger proportions of top executive positions filled by women and minorities and with larger proportions of women in their workforces are more likely than other companies to be involved in child care partnerships.

Table 37: Public-Private Partnerships in Child Care

Employer Characteristic	Involved	Sig.	Not Involved
All Companies	5%		95%
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		*	
0% *(n=314)*	4%		96%
1%–24% *(n=298)*	3		97
25%–49% *(n=237)*	7		93
50% or more *(n=209)*	9		91
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		***	
0% *(n=668)*	2%		98%
1%–24% *(n=225)*	10		90
25%–49% *(n=76)*	14.5		85.5
50% or more *(n=87)*	13		87
Women as Percentage of Workforce		***	
<40% *(n=297)*	1%		99%
40%–60% *(n=344)*	5		95
60% *(n=289)*	9		91

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; *** = p<.0001.*

Return on Investments in Child Care Benefits

Very few companies have actually evaluated return on investments in their child care benefits. However, by combining human resource directors' personal views with reported findings from evaluations, we constructed a global measure of *perceived return on investment* in child care benefits. Overall, 24 percent of companies that offer child care benefits perceive the costs of these benefits as outweighing the benefits, while 40 percent view these benefits as cost-neutral and 36 percent perceive benefits as outweighing costs (Table 38).

- Companies with larger proportions of top executive positions filled by women, and larger proportions of women in their workforces are more likely than other companies to report positive returns on their investments in child care benefits. Among industry groups, companies in finance/insurance/real estate and professional services are most likely to perceive positive returns on their investments, while companies in the wholesale/retail trades are most likely to perceive costs as outweighing benefits.

Table 38: Return on Investments in Child Care Benefits

Employer Characteristic	Costs Outweigh Benefits	Cost Neutral	Benefits Outweigh Costs	Sig.
All Companies	24%	40%	36%	
Industry				***
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=178)*	26%	51%	23%	
Professional Services *(n=163)*	21	30	49	
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=83)*	30	37	33	
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=85)*	15	32	53	
Other Services *(n=88)*	27	44	28	
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women				*
0 % *(n=141)*	27%	42%	31%	
1%–24% *(n=164)*	24	50	26	
25%–49% *(n=148)*	18	45	38	
50% or more *(n=145)*	28	21	51	
Women as Percentage of Workforce				***
<40% *(n=143)*	30%	45%	25%	
40%–60% *(n=221)*	20	44	36	
60% *(n=165)*	22	36	52	

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; *** = p<.0001.*

Summary: Child Care Assistance

It is not surprising that companies are more likely to provide low- or no-cost child care programs (such as DCAPs) than those that are more costly. The number of companies considering new options, such as resource and referral (12 percent) and on- or near-site child care (12 percent), indicates that there could be growth in employer-supported child care in the coming years (Table 39).

Table 39: Child Care Assistance

Does your company provide...	Yes	No, But Considering
Access to information to help locate child care in the community?	36%	12%
Child care at or near the worksite?	9	12
Payment for child care with vouchers or other subsidies that have direct costs to the company?	5	5
Dependent care assistance plans (DCAPs) that help employees pay for child care with pretax dollars?	50	Not asked
Reimbursements of child care costs when employees work late?	4	Not asked
Reimbursement of child care costs when employees travel for business?	6	Not asked
Child care for school-age children on vacation?	6	2.5
Back-up or emergency care for employees when their regular child care arrangements fall apart?	4	4.5
Sick care for the children of employees?	5	3
Financial support of local child care through a fund or corporate contributions beyond United Way?	9	Not asked
Public/Private partnership in child care	5	Not asked

Overall, larger companies are far more likely than their smaller counterparts to provide child care assistance. Companies in the financial/insurance/real estate industry group also tend to do more. In addition, the number of women in top executive positions stands out as one of the most consistent predictors of assistance with everyday child care issues—assistance in finding and paying for child care and the provision of on- or near-site child care. Help with sporadic child care needs—such as emergency/backup and sick care, as well as reimbursement for child care costs for travel and for working late—tends to be associated with business reasons. These include dif-

ficulty in filling vacancies, having experienced recent downsizing, and doing better or worse financially than one's competitors.

Among companies offering any child care benefit, 24 percent perceive negative returns on their investment, somewhat higher than reported for flexible work arrangements and family leave policies. Another 40 percent perceive child care assistance programs to be cost-neutral, and 36 percent think that the benefits of these programs outweigh their costs.

Elder Care Assistance

Historically, and still today, families provide the major part of nonmedical care for elderly relatives. As the population ages and labor force participation expands, however, the availability of nonemployed family members available to provide care is not keeping pace with needs. Looking into the future, elder care will demand time and attention from growing numbers of employees, affecting the way they work.

Data from the 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce reveal that 23 percent of wage and salaried workers, employed by companies with 100 or more employees, had elder care responsibilities during the preceding year, spending an average of 11 hours per week providing assistance of various types. Furthermore, 8 percent of workers surveyed in companies with 100 or more employees had both elder care and child care responsibilities at some point during the previous year. Of workers who provided elder care, 39 percent lost time from work to do so. As the U.S. population ages, growing elder care responsibilities promise to have an even greater impact on the workforce. Fully 42 percent of employees surveyed in 1997 expect to have elder care responsibilities over the next five years.

This section of the report examines several benefits that provide assistance to employees with elder care responsibilities.

Elder Care Resource and Referral Services

Twenty-three percent of companies with 100 or more employees provide elder care resource and referral services (ECR&R), almost always through contracts with outside vendors (Table 40).

- Companies with more employees, with larger proportions of executive positions filled by minorities and women, and with larger proportions of women in their workforces are more likely than other companies to offer elder care resource and referral services. Among industry groups, companies in the finance/insurance/real estate services and

professional services are most likely to offer this benefit, while companies in the wholesale/retail trades are least likely.

- An additional 5 percent of companies are considering offering elder care resource and referral services. Companies with more than 1,000 employees are more likely than others to be considering this option.

Table 40: Elder Care Resource and Referral

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	23%		77%
Number of Employees		***	
Fewer than 250 *(n=401)*	17%		83%
250–999 *(n=375)*	23		77
1,000 or more *(n=268)*	34		66
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=305)*	20%		80%
Professional Services *(n=274)*	31		69
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=184)*	14		86
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	29		71
Other Services *(n=137)*	21		79
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		***	
0% *(n=309)*	14%		86%
1%–24% *(n=293)*	23		77
25%–49% *(n=232)*	28		72
50% or more *(n=209)*	32.5		67.5
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		***	
0% *(n=656)*	19%		81%
1%–24% *(n=223)*	26		74
25%–49% *(n=76)*	39.5		60.5
50% or more *(n=87)*	34.5		65.5
Women as Percentage of Workforce		***	
<40% *(n=284)*	15%		85%
40%–60% *(n=343)*	24		76
60% *(n=289)*	29		71

Significance Levels: *** = $p<.0001$.

Long-term Care Insurance for Family Members

Nine percent of companies with 100 or more employees offer long-term care insurance for members of employees' families (Table 41).

- Larger companies, companies with more locations, and those with smaller proportions of hourly workers are more likely than other companies to offer long-term care insurance for family members. Companies in goods-producing industries and the wholesale/retail trades are less likely than companies in other industries to offer long-term care insurance for employees' families.

Table 41: Long-term Care Insurance for Family Members

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	9%		91%
Number of Employees		*	
Fewer than 250 *(n=402)*	7%		93%
250–999 *(n=380)*	8		92
1,000 or more *(n=267)*	14		86
Number of Company Sites		**	
Fewer than 4 *(n=420)*	5%		95%
4-14 *(n=392)*	12		88
15 or more *(n=236)*	12		88
Industry		**	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=309)*	6%		94%
Professional Services *(n=276)*	14		86
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=185)*	3		97
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	11		89
Other Services *(n=134)*	12		88
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 58% *(n=320)*	13%		87%
58–79% *(n=301)*	6		94
80% or more *(n=343)*	4		96

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; ** = p<.001; *** = p<.0001.*

- An additional 12 percent of companies are considering offering long-term care insurance for family members. Companies more likely to be considering this benefit are larger; are in the goods-producing industries, professional services, and finance/insurance/real estate services; and have smaller proportions of hourly workers in their workforces.

Financial Support for Elder Care Programs in the Community

Five percent of companies with 100 or more employees provide financial support to elder care programs in the communities where they operate that extends beyond contributions made on their behalf through the United Way (Table 42).

- Companies with minorities in at least one executive position are more likely than companies with no minorities in top positions to provide financial support to local elder care programs. Companies whose financial performance is better than their competitors' are also more likely to provide local program support.

Table 42: Financial Support of Local Elder Care Programs

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	5%		95%
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		*	
0% *(n=645)*	3%		97%
1%–24% *(n=221)*	10		90
25%–49% *(n=76)*	8		92
50% or more *(n=84)*	7		93
Comparative Financial Performance		*	
Better than Competitors *(n=414)*	7%		93%
Same as Competitors *(n=522)*	4		96
Worse than Competitors *(n=42)*	0		100

Significance Level: * = $p<.01$.

- At present, only an additional 2 percent of companies are considering the option of providing direct financial support to local elder care programs.

Return on Investments in Elder Care Assistance

Very few companies have actually evaluated return on investments in their elder care programs. However, by combining human resource directors' personal views with reported findings from evaluations, we constructed a global measure of *perceived return on investment* in elder care assistance. Overall, 19 percent of companies that offer any elder care assistance perceive the costs of that assistance as outweighing the benefits, while 69 percent view these programs as cost-neutral and 21 percent perceive benefits as outweighing costs (Table 43).

- Companies with more employees perceive more positive returns on their investments in elder care assistance. Among industry groups, companies in the goods-producing sector are most likely to perceive negative returns on investments associated with elder

care assistance, while companies in the finance/insurance/real estate group are most likely to perceive positive returns on investments. Companies with higher proportions of top executive positions filled by minorities are more likely to perceive the costs of elder care programs as outweighing the benefits.

Table 43: Return on Investments in Elder Care Programs

Employer Characteristic	Costs Outweigh Benefits	Cost Neutral	Benefits Outweigh Costs	Sig.
All Companies	19%	60%	21%	
Number of Employees				**
Fewer than 250 *(n=78)*	23%	71%	6%	
250–999 *(n=93)*	26	48	26	
1,000 or more *(n=100)*	10	62	28	
Industry				*
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=71)*	31%	54%	16%	
Professional Services *(n=83)*	18	55	27	
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=28)*	14	75	11	
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=43)*	5	61	35	
Other Services *(n=44)*	21	66	14	
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities				*
0% *(n=139)*	13%	68%	19%	
1%–24% *(n=72)*	15	60	25	
25%–49% *(n=23)*	26	52	22	
50% or more *(n=37)*	46	35	19	

Significance Levels: * = $p<.01$; ** = $p<.001$.

Summary: Elder Care Assistance

While 23 percent of companies with 100 or more employees currently offer elder care resource and referral services, only 9 percent offer long-term care insurance for family members, and only 5 percent make direct financial contributions to elder care programs in the communities where they operate. Another 5 percent are considering resource and referral services, while 2 percent are considering direct financial support for local programs. Most notably, 12 percent of companies are considering long-term care insurance for family members, a benefit of growing interest to the aging workforce and population at large (Table 44).

Table 44: Elder Care Assistance

Does your company provide....	Yes	No, But Considering
Elder care resource and referral services?	23%	5%
Long-term care insurance for family members?	9	12
Direct financial support for local elder care programs?	5	2

(n=1057)

Among companies offering any form of elder care assistance, 19 percent perceive the costs for these programs as outweighing benefits—lower than the 24 percent who perceived negative returns on investments for child care assistance and in line with the 17 and 18 percent who perceived negative returns on investments for flexible work arrangements and family leave policies. In addition, 60 percent view investments in elder care programs as cost-neutral, while 21 percent perceive positive returns on their investments.

Helping Employees Resolve Family Problems

The traditional approach to helping employees address serious personal and relational problems on and off the job has been to apply mental-health models that involve counseling and therapy. Employee Assistance Programs, or EAPs, have been the vehicles for delivering these services directly or through referrals to community agencies. More recently, educational programs have been added to help employees address more manageable issues and to build their skills in various areas, including their parenting and general work-life problem-solving skills.

Employee assistance programs

Fifty-six percent of companies report offering an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) designed to help employees deal with problems that may affect their work or personal life (Table 45).

Table 45: Employee Assistance Programs

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	56%		44%
Number of Employees		***	
Fewer than 250 *(n=407)*	40%		60%
250–999 *(n=377)*	58		42
1,000 or more *(n=268)*	79		21
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=312)*	56%		44%
Professional Services *(n=274)*	65		35
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=186)*	41		59
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	59		41
Other Services *(n=137)*	57		43
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		**	
0% *(n=314)*	46.5%		53.5%
1%–24% *(n=295)*	59		41
25%–49% *(n=234)*	63		37
50% or more *(n=209)*	59		41
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		***	
0% *(n=662)*	49.5%		50.5%
1%–24% *(n=225)*	69		31
25%–49% *(n=76)*	68		32
50% or more *(n=88)*	64		36
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 58% *(n=321)*	69%		31%
58–79% *(n=304)*	55		45
80% or more *(n=344)*	42		58
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce		*	
0% *(n=781)*	53%		47%
1%–29% *(n=104)*	65		35
30% or more *(n=121)*	63		37
Downsizing in the Last 12 Months		**	
Yes *(n=302)*	64%		36%
No *(n=748)*	53		47

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; ** = p<.001; *** = p<.0001.*

- Larger companies, companies with larger proportions of top executive positions filled by women and minorities, companies with smaller proportions of hourly workers, companies with at least some unionized workers, and those that have downsized in the past 12 months are more likely than other companies to offer EAPs. A striking 79 percent of companies with 1,000 or more employees offer EAPs. Downsizing appears to provide a strong stimulus to offer assistance programs to both the downsized and survivors of downsizing who, with their families, may be under a great deal of stress. Among industry groups, companies providing professional services are most likely to offer EAPs. Three components of the professional services sector—health, education, and social services—represent traditional *helping* professions that are particularly compatible with EAP approaches.

Work-Life Seminars

One in four companies provides workshops or seminars on parenting, child development, care of the elderly, or work-family problems (Table 46).

- Larger companies, companies with more of their executive positions filled by women and minorities, and those with larger proportions of women and fewer hourly workers in their workforces are more likely to provide work-life seminars at the workplace. In fact, companies with half or more female executive are more than three times as likely (41 percent) than companies with no female executives (13 percent) to provide these seminars at the workplace. Companies in goods-producing industries and the wholesale/retail trades are about half as likely to provide work-life seminars as companies in other industrial sectors.

Table 46: Work-Life Seminars

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	25%		75%
Number of Employees		***	
Fewer than 250 *(n=407)*	17%		83%
250-999 *(n=379)*	22		78
1,000 or more *(n=267)*	40		60
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=312)*	17%		83%
Professional Services *(n=276)*	35.5		64.5
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=186)*	12		88
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	31		69
Other Services *(n=137)*	31		69
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		***	
0% *(n=313)*	13%		87%
1%–24% *(n=296)*	24		76
25%–49% *(n=236)*	27		73
50% or more *(n=208)*	41		59
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		***	
0% *(n=665)*	21%		79%
1%–24% *(n=225)*	27		73
25%–49% *(n=77)*	34		66
50% or more *(n=88)*	37.5		62.5
Women as Percentage of Workforce		**	
Less than 40% *(n=296)*	19%		81%
40%–60% *(n=343)*	25		75
More than 60% *(n=289)*	31.5		68.5
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 58% *(n=323)*	31%		69%
58–79% *(n=304)*	24		76
80% or more *(n=343)*	14		86

*Significance Levels: ** = p<.001; *** = p<.0001.*

Programs for the Teenage Children of Employees

Teenage children often present their parents with challenges as well as rewards. Although the early years of life have received growing attention as the critical years in children's development, every year in a child's development is critical, and the crises of adolescence are among the biggest developmental challenges that children and parents face.

Twelve percent of companies with 100 or more employees offer programs for the teenage children of their workers (Table 47).

- Larger companies are more likely than smaller companies to offer programs for teenagers. Among industry groups, the finance/insurance/real estate services are most likely to offer programs for teenagers, while the wholesale/retail trades are least likely.

Table 47: Programs for Teenage Children of Employees

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	12%		88%
Number of Employees		***	
Fewer than 250 *(n=403)*	6%		94%
250-999 *(n=378)*	11		89
1,000 or more *(n=267)*	22		78
Industry		**	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=309)*	10%		90%
Professional Services *(n=274)*	12		88
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=186)*	4		96
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	20		80
Other Services *(n=137)*	15		85

*Significance Levels: ** = p<.001; *** = p<.0001.*

The following percentages of companies offer each type of program listed (Table 48).

- Although very few companies offer any program of any type, the most prevalent programs identified are EAPs (5 percent) and counseling (3 percent). Whether or not these are special programs for teens or merely represent the inclusion of teens in programs focused on meeting employee needs cannot be determined. Nonetheless, many would argue that assisting teens in the context of the family is the most effective approach in many cases.

Table 48: Types of Programs for Teenagers

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Do Not Provide
After-School Programs	0.5%	99.5%
Financial Support for Community Programs	1	99
Seminars/Workshops	2	98
Summer Programs	0.3	99.7
Employee Assistance Programs	5	95
Referral Information Services	1	99
Scholarship Programs/ Educational Assistance	1	99
Counseling	3	97
Other	1	99

Supportiveness of Supervisors and Workplace Culture

The 1997 National Study of the Changing Workforce found that supportive supervisors and workplaces are strongly linked to productivity and workers' well-being. Employees who perceive their supervisors and organizational cultures to be supportive of their family and personal needs are less stressed, feel more successful in balancing work and family life, are more loyal and committed to the success of their companies, are more satisfied with their jobs, and are more likely to want to remain with their employers (Galinsky & Bond, 1996; Bond et al., 1998).

Company representatives—generally human-resources directors—were asked how true each of four statements is of their company. Although one might expect them to present their companies in the best possible light, they were not overwhelmingly positive in their responses. General responses are presented in Table 49 and described below along with significant predictors.

- While 55 percent say it is *very true* that supervisors are "encouraged to be supportive of employees with family problems and to find solutions that work for both employees and the organization," 41 percent say this is only *somewhat true*, and 4 percent indicate that it is *not very true* or *not true at all*. Representatives of companies in the finance/insurance/real estate services and companies with larger proportions of top executive positions filled by women and minorities, with higher percentages of women in their workforces, and with lower percentages of union members are more positive in their assessments than others.

- Nearly two-thirds (66 percent) claim it is *very true* that "men and women who must attend to family matters are equally supported by supervisors and the organization," while 30 percent say it is *somewhat true* and 5 percent *not very true* or *not true at all*. Representatives of companies with more employees, those in the financial services and professional services industries, and those with larger proportions of women in their workforces respond more positively.

- Company representatives are least enthusiastic about the extent to which the organization "makes a real and ongoing effort to inform employees of available assistance for managing work and family responsibilities." Indeed, only 19 percent say this is *very true*, while 44 percent say *somewhat true* and 37 percent *not very true* or *not true at all*. Among industry groups, representatives of companies in the goods-producing industries, wholesale/retail trades, and "other services are" least positive about their companies' efforts to communicate the availability of work-family assistance, while those representing companies in finance/insurance/real estate and professional services respond most positively. Representatives of companies with larger proportions of top executive positions filled by women and minorities, with larger proportions of women in their workforces, and with better financial performance than competitors are more positive in their assessments.

- Questions were also asked about whether or not "management takes employees' personal needs into account when making business decisions." Thirty-one percent say *very true*, 51 percent *somewhat true*, and 18 percent *not very true* or *not true at all*. Representatives of companies with more employees, with larger proportions of executive positions filled by women, and with larger proportions of hourly and part-time workers in their workforces respond more positively than others.

Table 49: Perceived supportiveness of Supervisors and the Workplace culture

Statements about Supportiveness	Very True	Somewhat True	Not Very True/ Not True At All
Supervisors are encouraged to be supportive of employees with family problems and to find solutions that work for both employees and the organization	55%	41%	4%
Men and women who must attend to family matters are equally supported by supervisors and the organization	66	30	5
The organization makes a real and ongoing effort to inform employees of available assistance for managing work and family responsibilities	19	44	37
Management takes employees' personal needs into account when making business decisions	31	51	18

Company Efforts to Develop Supportive Supervisors

Many companies invest in the training of managers and supervisors as a way of improving policy implementation down the line, as well as improving general support in the workplace for employees from different backgrounds with different personal and family needs.

Work-Life Training

Two in five companies (43 percent) with 100 or more employees train supervisors in responding to the work-family needs of employees (Table 50).

- Larger companies and those with smaller proportions of hourly workers in their workforces are more likely than smaller companies to have trained supervisors to address work-family issues.

Table 50: Work-life training for supervisors

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	43%		57%
Number of Employees		**	
Less than 250 *(n=396)*	36%		64%
250–999 *(n=370)*	43.5		56.5
1,000 or more *(n=260)*	51.5		48.5
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		*	
Less than 58% *(n=311)*	48%		52%
58%–79% *(n=295)*	45		55
80% or more *(n=337)*	36.5		63.5

Significance Levels: * = $p<.01$; ** = $p<.001$.

Expanding Performance Evaluations to Include Management of Work-Life Issues

Forty-four percent of companies evaluate how well supervisors manage the work-family issues of employees when job performance appraisals are made. None of the factors we examined is a significant predictor of which companies are more likely than others to include work-life management criteria in job performance appraisals.

Training to Manage Diversity

Sixty-two percent of companies provide some training to supervisors in managing diversity (Table 51).

- Companies with more employees and more sites, larger proportions of top executive positions filled by women and minorities, and larger proportions of women in their workforces are more likely than others to provide diversity training to managers and supervisors.

Table 51: Training to Manage Diversity

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	62%		38%
Number of Employees		***	
Less than 250 *(n=391)*	53%		47%
250–999 *(n=371)*	61		39
1,000 or more *(n=264)*	78		22
Number of Company Sites		***	
Fewer than 4 *(n=406)*	56%		44%
4-14 *(n=389)*	63		37
15 or more *(n=232)*	72		28
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		**	
0% *(n=306)*	56.5%		43.5%
1%–24% *(n=297)*	63		37
25%–49% *(n=227)*	61		39
50% or more *(n=197)*	73		27
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		**	
0% *(n=644)*	59%		41%
1%–24% *(n=220)*	66		34
25%–49% *(n=76)*	67		33
50% or more *(n=85)*	75		25
Women as Percentage of Workforce		*	
Less than 40% *(n=289)*	54%		46%
40%–60% *(n=331)*	68		32
More than 60% *(n=285)*	67		33

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; ** = p<.001; *** = p<.0001.*

Career Counseling or Management/leadership Training Program for Women

Twenty-two percent of companies with 100 or more employees provide career counseling or management/leadership development programs for women to help them advance within the organization (Table 52).

Table 52: Career Development Programs for Women

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	22%		78%
Number of Employees		***	
Less than 250 *(n=405)*	16%		84%
250–999 *(n=378)*	22		78
1,000 or more *(n=264)*	32		68
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=310)*	20%		80%
Professional Services *(n=272)*	24		76
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=185)*	12		88
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	34		66
Other Services *(n=136)*	23.5		76.5
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		***	
0% *(n=310)*	16%		84%
1%–24% *(n=296)*	22		78
25%–49% *(n=234)*	20.5		79.5
50% or more *(n=207)*	34		66
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		***	
0% *(n=659)*	17%		83%
1%–24% *(n=224)*	30		70
25%–49% *(n=77)*	40		60
50% or more *(n=88)*	26		74
Women as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 40% *(n=293)*	14%		86%
40%–60% *(n=342)*	22		78
More than 60% *(n=288)*	32		68
Difficulty in Filling Highly Skilled Positions		*	
Very/Somewhat Easy *(n=328)*	17%		83%
Very/Somewhat Difficult *(n=712)*	24		76
Comparative Financial Performance		**	
Better than Competitors *(n=423)*	28%		72%
Same as Competitors *(n=528)*	19		81
Worse than Competitors *(n=44)*	14		86

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; ** = p<.001; *** = p<.0001.*

- Companies with more employees, larger proportions of top executive positions filled by women and minorities, larger proportions of women in their workforces, and greater difficulty filling highly skilled positions are more likely than other companies to offer career counseling or management/leadership programs for women. Among industry groups, companies in the finance/insurance/real estate sector are most likely to offer such programs, while companies in the wholesale/retail trades are least likely. Companies that are outperforming their competitors are more likely to offer such programs than companies' whose financial performance is worse than their competitors.

Health of Employees and Their Families

Time and again, research has shown that health insurance coverage for oneself and one's family is the single most important benefit to U.S. workers who rely almost exclusively on employers for coverage.

Personal Health Insurance for Full-Time Workers

Ninety-seven percent of companies with 100 or more employees offer personal health insurance benefits to full-time workers (Table 53).

- Although the vast majority of companies offer personal health insurance to full-time employees, companies with more employees; smaller proportions of women, hourly, and part-time workers; and better financial performance than their competitors are more likely to do so. Among industry groups, companies in finance/insurance/real estate services are most likely (100 percent of sample) to provide personal health insurance benefits for employees, while companies in the wholesale/retail trades are least likely.

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Table 53: Personal Health Insurance Benefits for Full-Time Workers

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	97%		3%
Number of Employees		*	
Fewer than 250 *(n=407)*	96%		4%
250–999 *(n=381)*	98		2
1,000 or more *(n=268)*	99.6		0.4
Industry		**	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=314)*	98%		2%
Professional Services *(n=276)*	98		2
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=186)*	92.5		7.5
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=144)*	100		0
Other Services *(n=137)*	96		4
Women as Percentage of Workforce		*	
Less than 40% *(n=297)*	99%		1%
40%–60% *(n=344)*	97		3
More than 60% *(n=289)*	95		5
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 58% *(n=323)*	100%		0%
58%–79% *(n=304)*	100		0
80% or more *(n=343)*	92		8
Part-Time Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 2.5% *(n=308)*	99%		1%
2.5%–14% *(n=320)*	98		2
15% or more *(n=297)*	93		7
Comparative Financial Performance		*	
Better than Competitors *(n=426)*	98%		2%
Same as Competitors *(n=529)*	97		3
Worse than Competitors *(n=45)*	89		11

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; ** = p<.001; *** = p<.0001.*

Personal Health Insurance for Part-Time Workers

Nineteen percent of companies with 100 or more employees provide part-time workers with the same health care benefits that full-time workers receive, while 14 percent provide prorated benefits and 67 percent no benefits at all (Table 54).

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Table 54: Health Insurance Benefits for Part-Time Workers

Employer Characteristic	Full Benefits	Pro-rated Benefits	No Benefits	Sig.
All Companies	19%	14%	67%	
Number of Employees				***
Fewer than 250 *(n=380)*	13%	11%	77%	
250–999 *(n=370)*	18	15	67	
1,000 or more *(n=255)*	30	18	53	
Industry				***
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=280)*	18%	10%	72%	
Professional Services *(n=271)*	20	22	58	
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=181)*	14	10	76	
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=140)*	26	16	57	
Other Services *(n=133)*	19	9	72	
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women				***
0% *(n=300)*	15%	10%	75%	
1%–24% *(n=284)*	19	15	66	
25%–49% *(n=219)*	19	12	69	
50% or more *(n=202)*	25	21	54	
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce				*
0% *(n=756)*	16%	13%	71%	
1%–29% *(n=99)*	27	17	56	
30% or more *(n=111)*	23	15	61	
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce				***
Less than 58% *(n=317)*	21%	18%	61%	
58%–79% *(n=292)*	22	11	67	
80% or more *(n=324)*	11	12	77	
Difficulty in Filling Highly Skilled Positions				*
Very/Somewhat Easy *(n=313)*	16%	10%	74%	
Very/Somewhat Difficult *(n=686)*	20	16	64	

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; *** = p<.0001.*

- Larger companies, companies in the professional or financial/ insurance/real estate services, companies with larger proportions of top executive positions filled by women, companies with larger proportions of unionized workers and smaller proportions of hourly workers, and those finding it more difficult to fill highly skilled positions are more likely to offer health care benefits to part-time workers on a full or prorated basis.

Health Insurance with Family Coverage

According to the 1998 BWLS, 95 percent of companies with 100 or more employees provide health insurance that includes coverage for family members (Table 55).

- Larger companies and companies with smaller percentages of women, hourly, and part-time workers in their workforces are more likely to provide health insurance that covers family members. Among industry groups, the wholesale and retail trades are least likely to provide health insurance with family coverage.

Table 55: Health Insurance with Coverage for Family Members

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	95%		5%
Number of Employees		***	
Fewer than 250 *(n=405)*	92%		8%
250–999 *(n=381)*	96		4
1,000 or more *(n=268)*	99		1
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=312)*	98%		2%
Professional Services *(n=276)*	95		5
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=186)*	88		12
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	99		1
Other Services *(n=137)*	95		5
Women as Percentage of Workforce		*	
Less than 40% *(n=295)*	98%		2%
40%–60% *(n=344)*	94.5		5.5
More than 60% *(n=289)*	93		7
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 58% *(n=323)*	99%		1%
58%–79% *(n=302)*	97		3
80% or more *(n=343)*	89		11
Part-Time Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 2.5% *(n=305)*	98%		2%
2.5%–14% *(n=320)*	98		2
15% or more *(n=298)*	87		13

Significance Levels: * = $p<.01$; *** = $p<.0001$.

Paid Health Insurance for Family Coverage

Only 12 percent of companies pay the entire premium for family members' health insurance. Three-quarters of companies (75 percent) pay for part of the premium, while 13 percent do not pay anything (Table 56).

- Companies in the goods-producing sector and the "other services" group, companies with smaller proportions of women and part-time employees in their workforces, and companies with larger proportions of unionized workers are more likely to pay all or part of the premium for family health insurance.

- The most striking finding is that 40 percent of companies with 30 percent or more of their workforce unionized pay the full premium for family health insurance coverage.

Table 56: Paid Health Insurance Premiums for Family Members

Employer Characteristic	Pays Full Premium	Pays Part of Premium	Pays None of Premium	Sig.
All Companies	12%	75%	13%	
Industry				***
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=306)*	18%	75%	7%	
Professional Services *(n=263)*	7	76	17	
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=163)*	11	72	17	
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=141)*	4	77	19	
Other Services *(n=127)*	19	73	8	
Women as Percentage of Workforce				***
Less than 40% *(n=289)*	19%	74%	7%	
40%–60% *(n=322)*	13	76	11	
More than 60% *(n=268)*	5	77	18	
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce				***
0% *(n=735)*	8%	76%	16%	
1%–29% *(n=105)*	9	88	4	
30% or more *(n=118)*	40	56	4	
Part-Time Workers as Percentage of Workforce				***
Less than 2.5% *(n=300)*	20%	73%	7%	
2.5%–14% *(n=314)*	10	75	15	
15% or more *(n=255)*	8	73	19	

Significance Level: *** = $p<.0001$.

Health Care Coverage for Unmarried Partners

Fourteen percent of companies with 100 or more employees offer health insurance coverage for unmarried partners who live together (Table 57).

- Companies that have larger proportions of executive positions filled by women and minorities and have *less* difficulty filling highly skilled and entry-level/hourly positions are more likely to cover unmarried partners.

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Table 57: Health Insurance Coverage for Unmarried Partners

Employer Characteristic	Covered	Sig.	Not Covered
All Companies	14%		86%
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		***	
0% *(n=287)*	9%		91%
1%–24% *(n=286)*	11.5		88.5
25%–49% *(n=214)*	15		85
50% or more *(n=188)*	25.5		74.5
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		***	
0% *(n=616)*	11%		89%
1%–24% *(n=214)*	16		84
25%–49% *(n=67)*	31		69
50% or more *(n=77)*	23		77
Difficulty in Filling Highly Skilled Positions		***	
Very/Somewhat Easy *(n=304)*	21%		79%
Very/Somewhat Difficult*(n=666)*	11		89
Difficulty in Filling Entry-Level Hourly Positions		**	
Very/Somewhat Easy *(n=593)*	17%		83%
Very/Somewhat Difficult*(n=372)*	9		91

*Significance Levels: ** = p<.001; *** = p<.0001.*

Wellness Programs for Employees and Their Families

Half of all companies with 100 or more employees provide wellness programs for employees and their families (Table 58).

- Companies with more employees, larger proportions of top executive positions filled by women and minorities, and smaller proportions of hourly and part-time workers are more likely than other companies to offer wellness programs to employees and their families. Companies in the wholesale and retail trades are least likely to offer wellness programs, while those in finance/insurance/real estate industries are most likely.

Table 58: Wellness Programs for Employees and Families

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	50.5%		49.5%
Number of Employees		***	
Fewer than 250 *(n=405)*	40%		60%
250–999 *(n=381)*	51		49
1,000 or more *(n=268)*	65		35
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=311)*	51%		49%
Professional Services *(n=276)*	51		49
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=186)*	33		67
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=144)*	65		35
Other Services *(n=137)*	56		44
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		*	
0% *(n=314)*	41%		59%
1%–24% *(n=298)*	52		48
25%–49% *(n=235)*	60		40
50% or more *(n=208)*	51		49
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		***	
0% *(n=665)*	44%		56%
1%–24% *(n=225)*	62		38
25%–49% *(n=77)*	57		43
50% or more *(n=87)*	61		39
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 58% *(n=323)*	57%		43%
58%–79% *(n=304)*	50		50
80% or more *(n=341)*	40		60
Part-Time Workers as Percentage of Workforce		*	
Less than 2.5% *(n=308)*	54%		46%
2.5%–14% *(n=317)*	51		49
15% or more *(n=298)*	41		59

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; *** = p<.0001.*

Lactation Space and Storage at Work

More than one-third of companies with 100 or more employees (37 percent) provide space and storage facilities to permit women who are nursing to continue to do so by expressing milk at work (Table 59).

- Companies with higher percentages of top executive positions filled by women and smaller proportions of hourly workers are more likely than other companies to provide space and storage facilities so that women who are nursing can express milk at work.

Table 59: Lactation Space and Storage

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	37%		63%
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		***	
0% *(n=312)*	27%		73%
1%–24% *(n=295)*	37		63
25%–49% *(n=231)*	44		56
50% or more *(n=201)*	45		55
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		*	
Less than 58% *(n=316)*	40%		60%
58%–79% *(n=303)*	39		61
80% or more *(n=336)*	29		71

*Significance Levels: *p<.01; ***p<.0001.*

Benefits to Enhance Economic Security

Although disability insurance, pensions, retirement plans, and scholarships for the children of employees have not generally been treated as "family-friendly" or "work-life" benefits because they predate these rubrics, such benefits offer important supports and safety nets to workers with and without immediate family responsibilities.

Temporary Disability Insurance

Seventy percent of companies with 100 or more employees offer temporary disability insurance (TDI), which typically provides partial replacement of pay until long-term Social Security Disability Insurance commences (Table 60).

Table 60: Temporary Disability Insurance

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	70%		30%
Number of Employees		***	
Fewer than 250 *(n=401)*	62%		38%
250–999 *(n=379)*	68		32
1,000 or more *(n=267)*	84		16
Number of Company Sites		*	
Fewer than 4 *(n=422)*	65%		35%
4-14 *(n=387)*	73		27
15 or more *(n=237)*	74		26
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=313)*	79%		21%
Professional Services *(n=269)*	68		32
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=184)*	59		41
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	72		28
Other Se ices *(n=137)*	65		35
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		*	
0% *(n=657)*	66%		34%
1%–24% *(n=226)*	77		23
25%–49% *(n=76)*	83		17
50% or more *(n=87)*	74		26
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
0% *(n=774)*	66%		34%
1%–29% *(n=106)*	79		21
30% or more *(n=120)*	87		13
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 58% *(n=320)*	78%		22%
58%–79% *(n=304)*	77		23
80% or more *(n=336)*	55		45
Part-Time Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 2.5% *(n=307)*	79%		21%
2.5%–14% *(n=319)*	74		26
15% or more *(n=291)*	53		47

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; *** = p<.0001.*

- Companies with more employees, more sites, larger proportions of top executive positions filled by minorities, larger proportions of unionized workers, and smaller proportions of hourly and part-time workers are more likely to offer temporary disability insurance. Among industry groups, the goods-producing industries are most likely to offer TDI, while the wholesale/retail trades are least likely.

Company-Paid Temporary Disability Insurance

Among companies that offer TDI, 64 percent pay the entire premium, 21 percent pay part of the premium, and 16 percent pay none of the premium (Table 61).

- Companies with less than 50 percent of top executive positions filled by women and companies that have not downsized in the past year are more likely to pay all or part of TDI premiums.

Table 61: Company-Paid Temporary Disability Insurance

Employer Characteristic	Pay All	Pay Part	Pay None	Sig.
All Companies	64%	21%	16%	
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women				**
0% *(n=216)*	67%	21%	12%	
1%–24% *(n=210*	67	21	12	
25%–49% *(n=162)*	68	16	16	
50% or more *(n=137)*	49	23	28	
Downsizing in the Last 12 Months				**
Yes *(n=209)*	52%	29%	19%	
No *(n=516)*	68	17	15	

*Significance Levels: ** = p<.001.*

Pension with Guaranteed Benefits

Defined or guaranteed benefit pension plans have been steadily declining in prevalence. Nevertheless, 48 percent of companies with 100 or more employees currently provide such plans, ensuring that workers will have predictable retirement income beyond social security (Table 62).

- Larger companies, companies with higher proportions of unionized workers, and those outperforming their competitors are more likely to provide defined/guaranteed benefit pension plans. Differences are most striking with respect to the proportion of unionized workers, with 79 percent of companies with 30 percent or more of their workforces unionized offering pensions versus 40 percent of companies with no union

workers. Among industry groups, "other services" and finance/insurance real estate are most likely to offer pensions, while the wholesale/retail trades are least likely.

Table 62: Defined/Guaranteed Benefit Pension Plans

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	48%		52%
Number of Employees		***	
Fewer than 250 *(n=403)*	41%		59%
250–999 *(n=374)*	45.5		54.5
1,000 or more *(n=267)*	60		40
Industry		**	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=311)*	46%		54%
Professional Services *(n=273)*	49		51
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=181)*	34		66
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=141)*	55		45
Other Services *(n=137)*	58		42
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
0% *(n=772)*	40%		60%
1%–29% *(n=106)*	62		38
30% or more *(n=121)*	78.5		21.5
Comparative Financial Performance		***	
Better than Competitors *(n=426)*	56%		44%
Same as Competitors *(n=522)*	44		56
Worse than Competitors *(n=45)*	33		67

*Significance Levels: ** = p<.001; *** = p<.0001.*

401(k) or 403(b) Retirement Plan

Fully 90 percent of companies with 100 or more employees offer 401(k) or 403(b) retirement plans—the latter plans being for employees of nonprofit organizations (Table 63).

- Larger companies, companies with larger proportions of unionized workers, companies with smaller proportions of hourly and part-time workers, companies that have more difficulty filling highly skilled positions, and those outperforming their competitors are more likely than other companies to offer individual retirement plans. Companies in the wholesale and retail trades and "other services" are less likely than companies in other industries to offer retirement plans.

Table 63: 401(k) or 403(b) Retirement Plan

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	90%		10%
Number of Employees		***	
Fewer than 250 *(n=407)*	84%		16%
250–999 *(n=381)*	92		8
1,000 or more *(n=268)*	97		3
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=314)*	94%		6%
Professional Services *(n=276)*	94		6
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=187)*	78		22
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	95		5
Other Services *(n=136)*	86		14
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce		*	
0% *(n=784)*	89%		11%
1%–29% *(n=106)*	97		3
30% or more *(n=121)*	94		6
Hourly Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 58% *(n=323)*	98.5%		1.5%
58%–79% *(n=304)*	93		7
80% or more *(n=343)*	79		21
Part-Time Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
Less than 2.5% *(n=308)*	95%		5%
2.5%–14% *(n=319)*	94		6
15% or more *(n=298)*	79		21
Difficulty in Filling Highly Skilled Positions		***	
Very/Somewhat Easy *(n=331)*	85%		15%
Very/Somewhat Difficult *(n=717)*	93		7
Comparative Financial Performance		**	
Better than Competitors *(n=426)*	94%		6%
Same as Competitors *(n=529)*	88.5		11.5
Worse than Competitors *(n=44)*	79.5		20.5

*Significance Levels: * = p<.01; ** = p<.001; *** = p<.0001.*

Company Contributions to Retirement Plan

Ninety-one percent of companies that offer 401(k) or 403(b) retirement plans make some contribution (Table 64).

- Companies in the professional services and finance/insurance/real estate services industries are least likely to contribute to employees' 401(k) or 403(b) retirement plans. Companies with larger proportions of unionized workers and smaller proportions of part-time workers are more likely than other companies to make contributions. Fully 99 percent of companies with 30 percent or more unionized workers contribute to individual retirement plans.

Table 64: Company Contribution to Retirement Plan

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	91%		9%
Industry		*	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=294)*	95%		5%
Professional Services *(n=260)*	86		14
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=141)*	91.5		8.5
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=136)*	86		14
Other Services *(n=118)*	94		6
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce		***	
0% *(n=690)*	88%		12%
1%–29% *(n=103)*	96		4
30% or more *(n=113)*	99		1
Part-Time Workers as Percentage of Workforce		**	
Less than 2.5% *(n=292)*	93%		7%
2.5%–14% *(n=301)*	94		6
15% or more *(n=231)*	83.5		16.5

Significance Levels: * = $p<.01$; ** = $p<.001$; *** = $p<.0001$.

Scholarships or Other Educational Assistance for the Children of Employees

Twenty-four percent of companies with 100 or more employees offer scholarships or other forms of educational assistance to the children of employees (Table 65).

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Table 65: Scholarships and Educational Assistance for Employees' Children

Employer Characteristic	Provide	Sig.	Do Not Provide
All Companies	24%		76%
Number of Employees		***	
Fewer than 250 *(n=405)*	16%		84%
250–999 *(n=377)*	21.5		78.5
1,000 or more *(n=268)*	40		60
Number of Company Sites		*	
Fewer than 4 *(n=420)*	20%		80%
4-14 *(n=391)*	25		75
15 or more *(n=237)*	31		69
Industry		***	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=307)*	32%		68%
Professional Services *(n=276)*	22		78
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=187)*	12		88
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=143)*	29		71
Other Services *(n=136)*	24		76
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		*	
0% *(n=662)*	21%		79%
1%–24% *(n=223)*	27		73
25%–49% *(n=77)*	39		61
50% or more *(n=88)*	26		74
Unionized Workers as Percentage of Workforce		*	
0% *(n=777)*	21%		79%
1%–29% *(n=106)*	31		69
30% or more *(n=120)*	32		68
Part-Time Workers as Percentage of Workforce		*	
Less than 2.5% *(n=303)*	27%		73%
2.5%–14% *(n=319)*	21		79
15% or more *(n=295)*	18		82
Comparative Financial Performance		*	
Better than Competitors *(n=426)*	29%		71%
Same as Competitors *(n=527)*	22		78
Worse than Competitors *(n=45)*	11		89

Significance Levels: * = $p<.01$; *** = $p<.0001$.

- Companies with more employees, more locations, at least some top executive positions filled by minorities, larger proportions of unionized workers, smaller proportions of part-time workers, and better financial performance than their competitors are more likely to offer scholarships or other educational assistance to the children of employees. Among industry groups, companies in the goods-producing industries are most likely to offer these benefits, while companies in the wholesale/retail trades are least likely.

Company Involvement in Community Life

There is a long history in the United States of business involvement in community life. In the past, most companies were typically involved on an independent basis or in confederation with other companies through local business associations. More recently, much attention has been given to "public-private partnerships," in which business teams up with state and local government to achieve goals of mutual interest. Another high-profile movement that involves companies in their communities is formal volunteer programs or individual volunteer activities of the employees' choosing.

Public-Private Partnerships

Eleven percent of companies with 100 or more employees are engaged in some type of partnership with local or state government to assist employed people in the community to meet their family and personal responsibilities. The percentages of companies involved with various types of initiatives are presented in Table 66.

Table 66: Types of Public-Private Partnerships

Type of Initiative	Involved	Not Involved
All types	11%	89%
Child Care Programs	5	95
Parent Education and Support Programs	7	93
Health Care Programs	6	94
Welfare to Work Programs	7	93
Education Programs	9	91

- Companies with fewer locations, larger proportions of top executive positions filled by women and minorities, and larger proportions of women in their workforces are more likely to be involved in public-private partnerships focusing on work-life needs of the communities in which they operate (Table 67). Among industry groups, the professional services and finance/insurance/real estate services are most likely to be involved, while the wholesale/retail trades and "other services" are least likely.

Table 67: Involvement in Any Public-Private Partnership

Employer Characteristic	Involved	Sig.	Not Involved
All Companies	11%		89%
Number of Company Sites		*	
Fewer than 4 *(n=408)*	16%		84%
4-14 *(n=388)*	7		93
15 or more *(n=225)*	9		91
Industry		**	
Manufact/Const/Agri *(n=306)*	10%		90%
Professional Services *(n=269)*	16		84
Wholesale/Retail Trade *(n=178)*	4.5		95.5
Finance/Insur/Real Est *(n=137)*	15		85
Other Services *(n=131)*	7		93
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Women		***	
0% *(n=306)*	6.5%		93.5%
1%–24% *(n=290)*	9		91
25%–49% *(n=228)*	10		90
50% or more *(n=197)*	21		79
Percentage of Executive Positions Filled by Minorities		***	
0% *(n=645)*	7%		93%
1%–24% *(n=217)*	14		86
25%–49% *(n=75)*	25		75
50% or more *(n=84)*	20		80
Women as Percentage of Workforce		**	
Less than 40% *(n=286)*	7%		93%
40%–60% *(n=336)*	10		90
More than 60% *(n=283)*	16		84

Significance Levels: * = $p<.01$; ** = $p<.001$; *** = $p<.0001$.

Volunteering during Work Hours

Seventy-three percent of companies with 100 or more employees allow their workers to volunteer in community activities—to an unknown extent—during work hours.

- None of the factors we examined predicts which companies are more or less likely to allow employees to engage in volunteer work during work hours.

Conclusion

The 1998 BWLS is the first in an ongoing series of surveys that the Families and Work Institute will use to track the development of company-provided work-life assistance over time. The mere fact that so many companies provide programmatic assistance and supportive work environments indicates that many company executives are aware that meeting the needs of employees not only helps these employees and their families, but also benefits the bottom line.

However, the findings of this study also suggest that many executives still do not share this belief, as evidenced by the small proportions of companies providing many of the benefits, programs, and policies we examined. To the extent that company leadership itself reflects the growing diversity of the workforce—particularly by promoting more women and minorities into top executive positions—one might expect to see an increase in work-life support, as our findings suggest. In addition, however, we believe that rigorous research must continue to provide the necessary independent perspectives that can challenge companies to reexamine the status quo and point them in the direction of potential solutions.

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